

**REDEFINING CULTURAL IDENTITIES:
SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE**

Culturelink Joint Publications Series No 4

Course

Redefining Cultural Identities: Southeastern Europe

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Redefining Cultural Identities: Southeastern Europe

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Foreword

Foreword

This is the second collection of papers that follows lectures and discussions delivered during the second course on Redefining Cultural Identities. The course, held at the Inter-University Center of Postgraduate Studies in Dubrovnik, 14-19 May 2001, was devoted to the situation in Southeastern Europe. The previous course (held in 2000) dealt with the "Multicultural Contexts of the Central European and Mediterranean Regions". Both courses reflect the need to approach cultural identity issues in the light of recent transitional developments, the disintegration of Yugoslavia and an intense effort by all Southeast European societies invested in finding new ways of communication in the new international setting. Established academic and cultural circles found it difficult to react to the new challenges, and in many cases they were interested primarily in the past and history rather than in emerging new cultural values, in civil society and in the process of systemic transition that has been going on for more than ten years now. The initiative to open discussion on redefining cultural identities in the newly emerging setting was initially supported by the Royaumont Process of the European Union, and then by the Open Society Institute - Croatia in Zagreb and the Unesco Venice Office - UVO in Venice.

The theme of redefining cultural identities has a global reach. The focus on Southeastern Europe raised a lot of interest among students, professors and young professionals in the cultural and media field. Changes in the value systems instigated and supported by transitional processes have become obvious by now. Most Southeastern European societies perceive themselves as being part of a different and not very well known international context. They see the European Union and Europe in general as the main reference point for their cultural development. At the same time, they experience uneasiness generated by the changes or crises in cultural identity. Unfortunately, this uneasiness is first reflected as mistrust of the neighbors. Therefore interregional cultural co-operation and communication is not supported by a genuine interest in neighboring cultures and peoples and it remains an issue of political consideration and political correctness.

The papers included in this collection were submitted about four months after the course. While the perception of the Balkans and Southeastern

Europe as a region dominated the discussions in the course, it may come as a surprise to see that a number of authors are now discussing issues of borders as dominating the self-perception of Southeastern European and Balkan cultures. Borderlines and border areas seem to have a major impact on the redefinition of identities in Southeastern Europe. If they exist, they need to be transgressed and changed; if they do not exist, they need to be erased (physically and psychologically), in order to help self-identification and cultural orientation in the newly designed regional space.

This feeling has been fully reflected in the question as to whether Southeastern Europe (or the Balkans) can be a region. Can this space be an imagined whole that helps define cultures, identities, aspirations, existence of peoples? It is very strongly felt that the definition of the region is imposed from the outside, in spite of the fact that many parts of this whole aspire to be linked with other neighboring parts of Europe rather than among themselves. This is the source of the feeling that others are closing this region out exactly by imposing on it the idea of an integrated region. The inner reaction to this process is not a tendency to better co-operate and level the differences, but, on the contrary, to insist on the differences. Sometimes the "handicap of heterogeneity" (Joseph Roucek) may be seen as a possible way out of a presumably imposed uniformity.

Thus regional positioning can at the moment offer only a fragile framework for identification. What is the meaning of identity, and what is cultural identity in the flux of change? An effort to elucidate some of the related points is seen in the texts that treat transitional issues. The new cultural values and relationships are not subject to systematization, but, on the contrary, they incite questioning of stereotypes which became an obstacle to understanding others living in the same region and often in similar conditions. There is the feeling that many in Southeastern Europe are looking for an initial and most basic element of self-identification. It becomes obvious that this element cannot any longer be a clan, a tribe or a nation, but probably an individual. A mixture of cultural influences and interactions, language, religion, and many other elements influence definition of a personal cultural identity. An analysis of such elements and the local situations may, hopefully, incite the young intellectuals from Southeastern Europe to approach cultural identity issues as relational and thus open a possible way to a better understanding of the integration of this region into a wider global and European context.

The Editor

Culture, Identity, Southeastern Europe

The Impact of Identity on Local Development and Democracy¹

Thierry Verhelst, Network Cultures, Brussels

The issue of identity is coming back. The more ideologies wither away and cultural homogenization is achieved through the globalization of markets and media, the more assertive the claim for cultural rooting and regional specificity. Today, homogenizing tendencies and heterogeneity are fellow travelers. This apparent paradox - globalization and simultaneous fragmentation - led Network Cultures to embark upon a new research project.² The conclusions of it are offered here.

At the very outset of this research project, *identity* was approached primarily as “the way a given community looks at itself and presents itself to outsiders”. Network Cultures specified that identity was not to be turned into a solid whole nor into a static object.³ Like culture, identity is evolving and is part of a complex whole where economic factors and power relations

1 This text was presented as the introduction to the course. It was later published in the *Quid pro Quo*, Journal of the South-North Network Cultures and Development, Brussels, No 40/41, June 2001.

2 Network Cultures’ methodology is rather unique. We bring together ten to fifteen people from the South and as many people from Europe. Each is asked to send in a “first wave” paper on the specific topic agreed upon. A small steering committee convenes to study all the papers and drafts a series of questions to be answered by each participant in a “second wave” paper. A “third wave” offers a chance to each participant to formulate questions and topics to be addressed in the final stage. For this stage, all participants are invited to meet in a workshop where the various issues raised by each can be deepened collectively. Experience has shown that this is a very rewarding methodology, which combines disciplined reflection with informality, conviviality and creativity. This research project is supported by the European Commission and a number of NGOs. Network Cultures is formally recognized by UNESCO as an international NGO-network involved in research and training on cultures and development.

3 That is “reified” by an “essentialist” approach.

interact. We therefore reject any kind of simplistic cause-and-effect approach whereby identity would determine and fully explain peoples' behavior.

It was made clear that the idealization of identity was not part of the exercise. Recent events in former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda show dramatically that identity may have very negative and violent consequences. Conversely, it was mentioned that identity and cultures may "enable people to resist positively what they see as alienating and imperialistic structures and policies", thus opening the field of our enquiry to interesting and positive economic and political alternatives based on identity.

1. Globalization v. local identity

By *local development* was meant any process which draws on local resources and know-how in order to enhance people-based quality of life, social justice and environmental care, as opposed to a merely quantifiable and profit-oriented economic growth process, subservient to the dominant paradigm of neo-liberal globalization.

By *democracy* was meant a process towards achieving on-going peoples' participation and a strong sense of collective responsibility, in other words "deep" democracy which goes beyond an occasional electoral consultation whereby people delegate to politicians, and to established powers that be, the definition and care of the common good.

As mere "economistic" globalization seems to contribute to the degradation of local development and of local democracy, there is an urgent need for the restoration of a better balance between market, state and organized citizens (civil society). Today, decentralization, self-reliance, local autonomy and grassroots democracy are becoming buzzwords. They are investigated in order to monitor how they facilitate the involvement of people in the decisions that affect their lives.

Experiences reported on during Network Cultures' workshop originated from regions as varied as tribal highlands in the Philippines, Wales, the Russian Federation, a coastal area of Southern Brazil, Sicily, Mapucheland in Chile, a Swiss Alpine Village, Kivu in Congo, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica and Guatemala, Flanders in Belgium, Chiapas and Oaxaca States in Mexico, "Cathare country" and Corsica in France, Buddhist countryside villages in Cambodia, the Algarve in Portugal, Hungary with its Gypsy element, Ethiopia, the island of Eigg in Scotland, Haiti, as well as multicultural cities

like Bradford in England, Brussels in Belgium, Lille in France, Rijeka in Croatia, Tepoztlan in Mexico, Sarajevo in Bosnia, Glasgow in Scotland.

2. Definition and components of identity

Participants in the research project on identity confirmed Network Cultures' overall approach to collective identity as being largely a social construct.

2.1 Identity: fantasy or reality?

Identity is a story one tells to oneself and to others. That story is partly objective and real, partly imagined and subjective. Anthony Giddens writes about a people's identity as "a narrative about themselves". Identity is therefore composed of new, more or less imagined or created elements and of older, more or less "given" elements. One might say that identity is both constructed (as a conscious and deliberate process) and "given". This is a fundamental observation to be kept in mind. There is a dialectic between imagination and reality in most identity claims. Identity is a narrative but it often refers to a certain content, to some ingredients.

Many observers, and most participants in the present project, agree to look at identity as a social construct, but add that it constitutes a stable niche. Thus, some observers claim that "Africans build tribes to belong to"⁴ As was reported in this project, the Kalinga mountain people (Philippines) have strong and obvious ties to their past. Like many ethnic groups, they display specific bodily features. Their culture differs from that of surrounding groups. This being said, the use made of that identity may vary according to the time, circumstances and persons involved.

4 According to some authors (R. Dooms) referring to ethnicity in Africa, identity "works" as long as people recognize themselves in that construction: it remains as long as it serves peoples' material and non-material interests. In that sense, it is a strategy to relate to others. It does not necessarily have to contain much objective "content". It is noteworthy that political scientists who study tragedies like those in Rwanda often thus tend to exclude the objective ingredients of identity. Their intentions are commendable but their approach is somewhat artificial when it boils down to negating any objective difference. After all, it remains true that most Tutsi are taller than most Hutu, even if it is correct to state that the Tutsi-Hutu difference has been largely exaggerated by colonial powers and ethnologists, who have turned it into a dangerous stereotype.

2.2 What are the ingredients of identity?

2.2.1 Individual and collective identities

Although no clear-cut distinction can be made between individual and collective identity, one can focus either on personal identity, or on group identity or on social identity. Classical sociologists (e.g. Durkheim) concentrated on the latter. Anthropologists (e.g. Malinowski or Radcliffe-Brown) focused rather more on groups, whereas psychologists and psychoanalysts (e.g. Freud) were primarily interested in personal identity. Psychoanalysts influenced by Marxist thought (e.g. Fromm and Laign) would insist that groups and society at large contribute to personal identity. The reverse is also true. Groups are made out of persons with their own individual identity. It is consequently useful to bear in mind the importance of individual identities even in a research project which focuses on collective identity.⁵

Factors contributing to and constitutive of an *individuals* identity are said to be: origin (time and space where one's personal history has unfolded), gender, age, anatomical peculiarities, beliefs, spirituality, psychological traits, etc. It would appear, therefore, that identity includes both acquired (cultural) and given (natural) elements.

Parts of the individual identity have to do with defining and assessing oneself, one's environment and the transience of one's life. This is related to "existential questions" (Anthony Giddens) which orient people vis-à-vis the world outside and contribute to a person's inner formation. Spirituality, which is part and parcel of one's individual identity, can be said to be the "interior side of identity". Spirituality gives meaning to who people are and to what they do. It suggests answers to how they behave and why a particular type of behavior is being adopted. Personal identity has therefore to do with "who I am and how I am".

2.2.2 Components

The 1999 Hungarian statute for the protection of national minorities states that support to ethnic groups must be given by helping them to safeguard

⁵ It is to be remembered that the other project which is part of Network Cultures' present research program dealt with identity as an individual and relatively more intimate phenomenon. It took place in 1998-1999 and was called "Roots and Wings". See *Cultures and Development*, n° 35/36 (November 1999).

such things as: “culture, heritage, religion, language, tradition...”. The components or ingredients of identity seem thus to be defined in Hungarian law.

Identity is also related to things like social class, territory, common profession, landscape, songs, the “agrarian heritage” (tools, buildings), as well as the know-how (for example, about processing of local products). In the Sicilian town of Noto, the local architectural heritage, in particular its stately cathedral church, is seen and used as an important element in identity. In France’s “Pays Cathare”, the religious history of the region and its local idiom (the langue d’Oc) are seen as important components of the identity of this isolated mountainous region. Local know-how in terms of social organization, decision-making and conflict resolution is mentioned as part of the identity of Central American indigenous peoples. Land is a key component of identity: examples from Mapuche people in Chile and from Negrito and Badjao minorities in the Philippines clearly illustrate this.

3. Multiple identities

There are multiple identities within a group. This is so because a group is made up of individuals who may have, at their personal, family or other sub- or supra-group level, identities which conflict with, or at least differ from, the identity of the group of which they are part. Conversely, different groups with which an individual identifies are frequently maintaining (partly) different and conflicting value systems. It is also appropriate to refer to multiple identities because identity is often a mixture of various elements which themselves are in a state of flux.

3.1 The case of a Malaysian Indian Scot

A participant in Network Cultures’ research project on identity was herself a fascinating case of multiple identity. Brought up in Africa, she spent seven years of her life in France, which is her country of origin, and then left to live in Ireland and later in Scotland. She reported on the challenge represented by “the issue of belonging and (of) developing a sense of responsibility” for the place she happens to live in. Referring to foreigners living in Scotland, the same author indicates that those born in Scotland express a mixed or dual identity, namely both Scottish and, for instance, Bangladeshi. Illustrative of the adaptation to circumstances which leads to diversified identity is this statement: “I am a Malaysian Indian and I live in Scotland, so I carry three identities and they change depending on where I am and what I am doing”.

The above allows a general observation. An identity is never global and all-encompassing. This was hinted at earlier when dealing with identity as a social construct. A totalitarian regime may wish to define identity as some innate, primordial and eternal drive. But such an “essentialist” approach to identity is a dangerous illusion, as is an “essentialist” approach to culture (See Network Cultures’ journal *Cultures and Development*, n° 24 of April 1996, p. 17).

3.2 Diversity: deliberate or not

It appears that the process of diversification of identity can be deliberate or, on the contrary, spontaneous, haphazard and relatively unconscious. The Brazilian fishermen’s case offers an example of a conscious and deliberate strategy of identity renewal and diversification (see item 10.1 below). Croatia offers an example of a non-deliberate process of diversification within one nation. Croatia is a crossroads of Slav, Mediterranean, Turkish, Byzantine and Central European influences. There is therefore in one single spot a multiple, diversified and potentially conflicting identity, which has simply grown as such through the ages.

4. Identity formation

As identity is often conjunctural and never “essential” nor eternal, a formation process can be observed. Prominent among *factors* contributing to identity formation are power relations. States and State institutions play a role in these power relations. They were looked at more closely in this project.

4.1 The role of the State

Schools (and States controlling those schools) also influence identity formation. In Sarajevo, each ethnically-based authority inculcates its own version of local history and identity to its pupils. Thus, schools contribute to “shape” peoples’ identity.

In Croatia, a “national culture” was artificially defined and imposed by the Tudjman government. It wanted to standardize culture so as to centralize power. This effort has not been successful throughout the country, however.

Most Russians assert their identity not on ethno-linguistic or cultural grounds but rather in terms of belonging to the Orthodox Church and the Russian people and State. Orthodoxy, autocracy and “narodnost” (people)

constitute a way of thinking in yesterday's and today's Russia. This sense of state-related community actually outweighs class differences.

“Institutional racism”, allegedly practised by English authorities, and local police attitudes of the local police provoked, among the people of the Manningham suburb of Bradford, a strong awareness of their belonging to a certain “ethnic” group. That tended to stimulate if not force an inclination among these people to stress that particular aspect of their identity in the public sphere.

The stressing of one's ethnic background promoted by the State authorities was tragic in Kosovo, particularly since Serbian President Miloshević's repeal of the local autonomy status of that province and the establishment of a Serbian-style apartheid system which in turn was reinforced by Albanian Kosovar paramilitary actions by the UCK.

Official policies played a key role in defining and/or reinforcing notions of ethnic identity in former colonial areas. In Rwanda and Burundi, the impact of German and Belgian rule on Hutu and Tutsi identity has been considerable. These labels were formerly quite relative, and in a state of flux. They referred to people's position in the “feudal” system at least as much as to their “racial” features. Over-simplifications by the colonial state led to the absolutization of these differences according to “tribal” distinctions. In Africa, ethnicity appears to some scholars as a modern construct, and not as a mere resurgence of the past.

In this sense, the policy waged by the present Ethiopian government would be interesting to study. It is based on a deliberate policy to recognize and encourage cultural diversity within this formerly highly centralized and homogenized State. Formerly, the Amharic culture of the Head of State - Emperor Haile Selassie or revolutionary leader Mengistu Haile Maryam - used to be dominant. Cultural decentralization is now meant to produce a dramatic shift in the “identity” of Ethiopia and of Ethiopians. Similarly (but at a much more local level), Philippine government policies affect existing notions of ethnic identity. Its 1997 Indigenous Peoples Rights Act empowered some communities to assert their ethnic identity as distinct from others. Because of the recognition of tribal right to ancestral domain, some groups have insisted that they should be recognized as separate cultural communities different from their traditional classification as mere sub-groups.

Generally speaking, one observes a gradual internalization process of the identity fostered or imposed on people by institutions such as the State.

4.2 The social context: power relations and identity

The overall social context is another factor contributing to identity formation.

The family is to be mentioned among institutions which contribute to identity-formation. For example, an observer mentions the strong identification of Bosnian ex-soldiers with their family and with what those families stood for. Rebellious male youths in Bradford (U.K.) who are particularly aggressive towards the female sex suggest also a strong family influence on their self-image as males and what that implies for behavior towards women. Pakistani youth in Bradford refer to the Qur'an as a reason for exercising control and power over women. (This legitimization is seen as an excuse by many women belonging to the Pakistani community). It seems to some observers that it is primarily a quest for power made necessary by the social context of low esteem that drives the young to turn to the Qur'an, more than a real in-depth appreciation of it.

A similar need to assert their dignity in front of a discouraging social attitude leads young unemployed male youth in urban quarters of France, Belgium and Luxembourg to assert their "roots" by learning Arabic. One way for rejected and frustrated people to make sure that others value them is to try and force others to reckon with them.

The references to identity often have to do with power. Thus ethnicity has been or is being manipulated by would-be leaders or political entrepreneurs pandering to rejected groups. This can be observed in Sarajevo and in various parts of the world such as Rwanda or the Congo. Post-war developments in Sarajevo point to identity being formed in such a way as to favor the economic advancement of one's own ethnic/religious community. Thus, people are tending to give a higher priority to being a Bosnian Muslim, or an Orthodox Serb or a Roman Catholic Croat. In Bradford, the Muslim community with which people identify has much to do with the necessity for pursuing economic interest in adverse circumstances.

Ethnicity in Africa turns into political tribalism. In other cases, ethnicity is a more genuine strategy against political-economic deprivation and an act of self-determination in cultural terms. Similar observations must be made regarding religious affiliation (India, Northern Ireland) or language (Belgium). The overall social and political context contributes to identity formation in a positive or negative sense.

5. Changing identities

Identity is “in a state of permanent transformation” states an observer of Mapuche people in Chile. Identity must be seen as a process, rather than a static collection of well-defined elements.

Change of identity is the product of a continuous interaction between the past, the present and the future with its economic, social, and political challenges. Identity is expressing not just “what we are” but also “what we want to be”, that is, in Jurgen Habermas’ words “our own project”. A change of identity is also related to an interaction between affirmation and recognition, that is between the “we” and the “you”.

5.1 Traditional societies and change

Among the Chilean Mapuche people, change has been considerable. It happened as a consequence of their being forced to evolve from semi-nomadic settlements to a sedentary way of life. Many continue to demonstrate inherited cultural traits while submitting themselves more or less voluntarily to the new conditions. Certain groups however are more conscious of the challenges to their identity change than others. They then decide to react to what they see as a process of impoverishment. They resist some cultural influences, and select some others, thus redefining and changing their identity. The Mapuche people have been well known for their capacity to face new situations, “adopting” elements from foreign cultures, “adapting” them to their own reality and consequently changing gradually part of their ancient identity while not allowing their sense of being Mapuche to be shattered by that change. They still have a strong collective identity, no matter how intense and brutal are the changes imposed.

The impact of colonization has definitely had a more destructive effect on the Negrito and Badjao people of the Philippines. These tribal populations also had to abandon their nomadic lifestyle in favor of a more sedentary life. Many have recently become “urban nomads”, actually begging for alms, and marginalized, discriminated against and looked down upon by the majority population. Their identity does not seem to allow them to resist as well as the Mapuche.

5.2 Identity of migrant groups

Among minorities in Scotland, identity is seen as “fluid”. “I am a Pakistani but life is a learning process. I will adapt to the place that I am in but I have

certain rules that will not change". Outsiders may stereotype "Pakistani", "Moroccan" or "Turkish" identity in cities of Britain, Belgium or Germany, but many migrants are slowly accommodating to the world around them and give up certain traditions while adopting new patterns of behavior characteristic of the dominant society around them. For example, the education and treatment of girls are starting to change here and there. Young people, particularly, are interested in partly renewing the cultural, linguistic and religious heritage of their parents. They show sensitivity to new life-styles and a willingness to break down some of the barriers between their own community and other groups. At the same time, they retain elements which they consider essential: "certain rules" which may have to do with religion, social organization, etc. They are apt to cling to their language or, even more tenaciously, to their own cuisine. Food and taste are seen as essential ingredients of identity.

In actual fact it is not so easy to establish what precisely migrant people have in common and what not. The cultural heritage and therefore the overall identity of communities living in urban quarters of big European cities tend to be less homogenous and less stable than outsiders often think. There is more diversity and change and less harmony, stability and consensual agreement in each group than outsiders assume. Tension exists not only between groups but also within each group (e.g. between age-groups or over unaccepted sexism).

6. The ability to relate as the core of identity

6.1 About healthy and perverse uses of identity

The very assertive indigenous people in Oaxaca (Mexico) see themselves as "knots in nets of concrete relations". These nets of relations constitute local communities. It is as if these communities consider that their identity is to be conscious of oneself as a group which relates to others. This brings to the fore an important observation, which touches on the very nature of the human being. Is identity not fundamentally about entering into relationship? "What constitutes my identity is not first what distinguishes me from others. My identity as a human person lies first and foremost in my ability to relate to the others" says Benoît Standaert, a Belgian Benedictine theologian and development thinker. If we agree with that statement, then it is fair to state that the most important characteristics of a person are his or her capacity to relate and to love. It is our ability to relate and love which is the core of our humanity and identity. A strong identity helps to accept and

appreciate the identity of the other. A group's openness to others constitutes the most promising function of identity for the creation of a liveable society: "Something mysterious which takes shape when you let go of labels... Finding one's identity is opening an empty space for meeting others," said one participant in Network Cultures' project.

Many participants agree that identity is fundamentally a matter of relationship. Consequently, in this text, and in Network Cultures' language, a positive and "healthy" identity is an identity leading to openness towards others. Individuals or groups with such a positive sense of identity gain self-confidence while at the same time practising values of tolerance and inclusion. They become involved in open relations with the outside world. Conversely, perverse or "negative" identity is what leads people to exclude others and to refuse relationship. This ends up in isolation, hatred and racism. That is precisely the reason why it is so important to stress the fact that identity is not some static content to be "possessed" for ever but is rather to be viewed as a narrative process.

To stress the above is very important. The affirmation of identity does not necessarily lead to hate and violence. Far from it, the affirmation of one's identity can be a positive psycho-cultural process essential for emancipation of a group and a person.

Every society needs identity for its development. Conversely, the absence of identity may be contributing to war. In the Balkans, the fall of communism left people in disarray. They did not know where they stood, what values they had. This void in identity led to violence. In the former USSR, the identity issue is a major problem. The communist party had tried to promote a "new socialist citizen", based on universal principles. Identity related to religion or ethnicity was deliberately discouraged. If and when acknowledged, it was definitely considered subservient and accessory. What had been inherited was to be forgotten, except for some folklore. No matter how relatively well-intentioned these policies may have been, they did not prevent a brutal explosion of excluding, hating claims of identity as soon as the power of the communist State was crushed.

6.2 Identity as a dangerous fantasy

The Haitian participant in Network Cultures' research project on identity mentioned the importance of "enthusiasm" in peoples' resistance to dictatorship and economic oppression. He believes that "enthusiasm" may help awaken sleeping energy but is reluctant to see this enthusiasm as fuelled by local culture. He draws sad conclusions indeed from the situation

currently prevailing in his country. Enthusiasm is to be understood here as it was by Emmanuel Kant when the philosopher spoke of moral ideas that move groups and crowds beyond a social order founded on egoism. Enthusiasm can be the source of resistance and of a critical democratization process. During the three years of military dictatorship after the bloody coup d'état of 1991 against the first democratically elected government in Haiti, enthusiasm was not crushed and, consequently, resistance did not lose its intensity. Disenchantment crept in later however, with the return of a constitutionally elected government which was not able to deliver the goods or show any sign of direction. Today the formidable energy that was manifested in the struggle against dictatorship is no more to be seen. Each person seems to withdraw into herself/himself, preoccupied with their own interests, concerned for their survival and that of their family. "The collective interest and any vision of the common good has literally disappeared". The author analyses this state of affairs as a "crisis of social ties". Politics are no more seen as bearers of hope and of meaningful social ties. For 90% of the Haitian population, there is no collective dream for the future, no common development project on the horizon. No new foundation for society has appeared. Rather, there is widespread mourning for the loss of enthusiasm. This situation may be compared to the one prevailing in Russia and other such countries exposed to the brutal shock of neo-liberal capitalism and a simulacrum of Western-style democracy.

In a context of civic depression such as the one prevailing in Haiti, the focus on cultural identity and the nationalist movements simply exploit the crisis of social bonds. People are led to believe that returning to their roots (Voodoo, Kreyol language in the case of Haiti), they will find meaning in the midst of the turmoil. In Haiti and elsewhere, such identity politics may turn out to reinforce racism, exclusion and poverty while offering no real resistance to the real problems of today. This Haitian example of a perverse use of identity does not lead the author to the blunt condemnation of all identity-based movements. The value of Indian identity movements such as those developed in Chiapas or Guatemala is obvious. He insists, however, that they are critical both of tradition and of modern globalized oppression. He makes a plea for human rights and universal values and recalls the historical role of the French revolution, which transformed individuals into citizens and diminished cultural peculiarities. He contrasts this universalistic and democratic model to the dangers of idealizing and "essentializing" cultural characteristics (language, religion, territory) which may lead to sterile nationalism and an illusory search for security. He sees some types of nationalism as a desperate attempt to achieve some parity

with the global economic centers. Clutching onto “the fantasy of an origin, a tribe or a nation (...) is reactive, sterile and unconcerned with fundamental human rights or universal values”.

7. Identity’s impact on local economic development

To talk about the relationship between identity and economics may seem far-fetched if not contradictory. Identity, as was said before, has to do with relations, social bonds and emotions. Today’s economics, on the other hand, relate to competition, individualism and the cold rationality of profit maximization. Indeed, identity and economics do not coincide that easily in today’s mentality.

Positive connections are to be observed between economic dynamism and a positive and strong identity. This is so because a strong identity is potentially conducive to trust and to a sense of common interest and responsibility for the common good, hence to solidarity. Identity can also contribute favorably to a feeling of stability, security and hope, to self-esteem, pride and a sense of “worth”.

Conversely, a weak or negative sense of identity may lead to a lack of energetic risk-taking and hence to poverty. To take the example of some tribal populations in Southeast Asia, they are said to be hampered if and when they have a negative self-image. They are then unable to pick up the challenges of confronting the local majority population and their economic logic. They feel hopeless and lost in the face of hostile and exploitative attitudes, and in the face of the effects of globalization. Similarly, lack of a sense of identity has led local populations in remote areas of Portugal, France, Switzerland or Congo to remain relatively dormant and frustrated. Lack of identity may also lead to lower mutual trust, hence to a less dynamic economic life. Haiti, Sarajevo and the condition of the Hungarian Roma people would suggest that the insistence on ethnic peculiarities is not, necessarily, leading to any material betterment.

7.1 Identity can give a place a future

Identity helps “give a future to a population and its territory”. The experience of the Mapuche people of Chile illustrates the fact that identity favors social, hence also economic co-operation. Identity acting as a compass, it helps people to orient themselves, to devise alternatives and to be innovative.

The Buddhist identity of Kmer farmers helps them acquire a sense of responsibility for shaping their lives and their future. The fear of a bad “karma” (result of one’s deeds after death and during reincarnation) leads Cambodians to “make merits” by giving (dana), upholding moral standards (sila), and being mindful (bhavana). Buddhist lay people and monks alike get involved in various associations which operate on the basis of solidarity, trust and mutual benefit: Pagoda Committees, Groups of Elders, Merit Cash Associations, Pagoda Rice Associations. These associations organize such development projects as health centers, roads, wells or the lending of rice to families undergoing food shortage. Small credit schemes for income-generating initiatives are also launched. No collateral is demanded as the common identity is providing enough mutual trust. Interest due is mainly used for donations, public works, pagoda repairs, in other words, for common purposes which in turn reinforce trust and social cohesion. The accent on trust is noteworthy, although one must not idealize this: in order to ensure reimbursement, credit tends to be granted more often to well-off families!

Reports on the Quiche people of Guatemala and the Bribri from Costa Rica, as well as those on traditional fishermen and forest dwellers in Brazil give special attention to the sustainability ensured by traditional people’s cosmology and land use. They show that “sustainable development” as implemented by these traditional communities is based on their identity rather than on the Western paradigm. They show specific forms of forest and water “management” which are worth studying. In the Mesoamerican biological corridor, rural communities generate very varied paths to development with a strong ecological component.

In Oaxaca (Mexico), living conditions have been improved. Ecological dry latrines were built, cholera was better controlled, self-sufficient productive projects were launched. The capacity to participate in the national and international market clearly improved. This is partly linked to the fact that the local communities have stressed their identity.

7.2 Identity, one factor among many others

As a conclusion, it may be stated that identity cannot be considered a mere detail or something optional. It is not to be relegated to a “soft sector” considered less vital and “serious” than economics or technology, which are often associated with what is “hard” and more effective. Without a strong and positive sense of identity, a people’s resistance and innovative dynamism is impoverished and may dwindle into gradual paralysis. A

linear cause-effect relationship is difficult to trace however. There certainly exists some kind of relationship but it takes place within a context much broader and more complex than the simple duality identity/development.

8. The impact of identity on local democracy

Does a strong sense of identity help strengthen people's participation in politics? Does it favor democratic values in general?

Local identity-based organizations have contributed to the democratization of society in Central America. Somewhat perplexed, "latino" and white people outside those indigenous groups are seeing Indians occupy spaces which historically were denied to them. The Indian identity movement definitely has helped to revitalize democracy, human rights and universal values of dignity, equality and justice.

Among a section of the Mapuche, community problems were dealt with in a satisfactory way as long as the local *lonko* (genealogical chief) was alive. He exercised both traditional functions and modern ones as the elected president of the Farmers Committee. Today, crucial conflicts regarding land have led local Mapuche communities to revive the *lonko* figure. Trust within the community and loyalty to the chief are maintained by several traditional practices (e.g. blood-brotherhood) or rituals (e.g. eating and drinking from the same dish and glass). Similarly, in Central America, the Bribri of Talamanca (Costa Rica) and the Quiché people of Totonicapan (Guatemala) offer telling examples of democratic decision-making on the basis of their existing community organization.

8.1 Tradition and democracy

In Central America, ancient forms of community organization are often either characterized by a very strong chief or a group of elders. This is not consistent with the dominant Western concepts of democracy (but it is wise to remember that Western democracy and traditional politics are both struggling with the problem of doing justice as much as possible to conflicting interests and ideas). Other communities are horizontal and dominated by a strong group consciousness. In such cases, the open confrontation of different opinions is being discouraged by an overarching urge for consensus.

A dual system of democracy appears in some places in Central America. One is very local, slow and based on traditional political procedures and know-how; another is centralized, fast and western-inspired. Local

communities have no other choice than to resort to rapid decision-making and to lobbying and political pressure with methods which are not characteristic of their tradition. To conclude: ethnic and cultural identity provides an inner strength to resist, but not necessarily the appropriate methods for joining the political game beyond the limits of the group.

What is noteworthy is that the revitalization of traditional Buddhist associations in Cambodia was combined with democratic innovations. The manner in which individuals were being appointed as committee members was no longer in keeping with tradition. Recalling the purity of tradition helped to correct this and to introduce the holding of secret ballots to elect members. This was enthusiastically welcomed by women. The option of putting up more candidates than positions to be filled, and ensuring that at least two fifths of the candidates were women, were innovative proposals. Periodic balloting has been slowly acknowledged despite the opposition of some traditional leaders. It remains to be seen how sustainable such innovations will be, considering the importance given in this milieu to “not losing face”.

8.2 Nationalism for what?

Nationalism can lead to nation-building, as was the case in Italy, Japan or Indonesia. Conversely, nationalism can break a nation into more or less autonomous or separate pieces as is the case in Quebec, Flanders or Catalonia. It can foster democracy (Mandela's nationalism; Gandhi's; Lumumba's) or it can jeopardize or kill it (Hitler, Miloshevich, Jirinovski). It would seem that national pride is fine but that the link between emotions and politics can be dangerous.

The nation can be seen as the expression of a “people”. This vision is based on the concept of *Kultur-Nation*, a nation built by a given people on a common ethnicity, soil, culture and language (cfr. Fichte, Herder and the so-called “German” model based on *Volk* (people)). The definition of what is “a people” is extremely complex. It may be based on language (but not the Swiss), on race (but not the Brazilians), on religion (but not the North Americans), on culture (but not the Belgians nor the Kazakh people...). Conversely, the nation can be seen as based on the common will to live together in respect of universal values (cfr. Montesquieu, Renan and the French “republican” model). The prevalent version of the modern State, whether liberal or socialist, was conceived according to the so-called French (republican) model which inspired the Age of Enlightenment (18th century). It was built on the negation of primary identities, those related to

history, ethnicity, language, region. It was often the State that built the nation as it succeeded in merging these various primary identities in the melting pot of “citizenship”. This State considered that its goal was to protect its citizens and, later, to strive towards the welfare of all. We would say: neither culture (the “German” model) nor pure abstract civic nationalism (the “French” model) should be the exclusive base of nationhood. The criterion should be: emancipation and participation with due recognition of the different identities prevailing in the national territory.

8.3 A return to ethnic politics: from U.S. multiculturalism to Kazakh ethnonost

Be that as it may, one observes the return to ethnic politics. The shift away from modern “civic nations” (like France, USA, Canada) to “ethnic nations” has spread since the sixties. The paradigm of ethnic solidarity and an “emotional culture” was considered as obsolete and taboo inside West European nations ever since the 18th century. The French Revolution led to a unifying centralized system which explicitly ignored distinct communities in “the indivisible French Republic”. Problems experienced by the French with the Islamic *hijab*veil in schools, and with Corsican claims to a separate recognition have to do with this rigid republican concept. In the communist bloc, cultural differences were also given secondary importance, whereas the “new socialist man” (*homo sovieticus*) was promoted, independently of his origin or language. May 68’s counter-culture and national movements against centralizing “unitarist” states led to the emergence of identity and to a rather unexpected reversal away from assimilation into the dominant culture of a centralizing Nation-State. Times were ripe for claims in favor of cultural pluralism. In the USA, there is a dramatic shift towards official multiculturalism. Various distinct “communities” are recognized: Black American, Korean American, Hispanic American, etc. One may wonder if there is enough room for intercultural relations and mutual enrichment in such segmented multiculturalism.

The present situation in Kazakhstan shows that it is impossible to function without redefining one’s group identity in a country where former collective bearings based on soviet socialism have been lost. Democratic social rights need then to be articulated with the defence of cultural rights. However, this is not without danger. After the fall of the Soviet Union, notions of identity and ethnicity developed rapidly but without the component of anti-dictatorial resistance which it gained in the sixties up

until the collapse of communism. In Kazakhstan, “ethnonost” (or the current tendency to assert one’s identity as Kazakh, Russian, etc.) means in fact to fight for group privileges.

Ethnonationalism is not leading to democratic emancipation. On the contrary, with it come new forms of autocratic rule and racism. Serbia offers a tragic example of this shift from “red” to “brown” authoritarianism. Class distinctions were replaced by ethnic differentiation. Insistence on ethnic, religious or language differences may severely hamper collective decision-making on common problems. This is tragically evidenced by the fact that in Sarajevo, Bosnian “Muslims”, “Catholic” Croats and Serbian “Orthodox” are now unable to join in a common urban program.

Centrally-defined Croatian identity was a counter-productive way to approach the issue of identity. This authoritarian approach through “identitarian centralization” only hampered freedom of expression. It was resisted successfully in Rijeka by an open-minded civil society drawing inspiration from its own city-based identity. It appears that identity can lead either to undemocratic homogenization of a so-called national culture defying diversity, or, conversely, to practices which favor the development of a local, multi-ethnic, “multinational” local democracy.

8.4 Purity is dangerous

To conclude, identity is an important and potentially positive phenomenon unless it becomes exclusive and based on “purity” or “superiority”. This applies for identity based on nation, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, etc. Whereas ethnic revival may serve the cause of more democracy and protection of collective (cultural and economic) rights in some countries, e.g. Mexico, Chile, Canada, etc., it leads to very different results in other countries (Balkans, Moldavia, Georgia). In Western European states, extreme right parties (Haider in Austria, *Front National* in France, Vlaams Blok in Flanders) use ethnicity to promote social discrimination towards non-autochthonous inhabitants. Under the guise of protection of the local cultural heritage, they dangerously jeopardize democracy.

9. A new role for the state: recognize identities and build bridges between them

Competitiveness now tops the chart of values. According to Manuel Castells, the famous Spanish sociologist now teaching at Berkeley, two reactions are possible to this process. The fittest, those with money and

power can find in this new value meaning and satisfaction. They build a new identity for themselves. This identity is totally individualistic, profit and consumption-oriented: "I make a lot of money and I spend a lot, therefore I am". This is the ideology of the dominant economic and/or technological elite. It is narcissistic and libertarian. The second reaction is that of all the other people. These are the people who cannot afford to share this individualistic ideology or who refuse to share it. Castells estimates that up to 90% of the population in the South are in that category, and probably more than half of the population in the North. Thus, the majority of people seek meaning to their lives by building identities on simple and strong values which they share with others, for example God, an ideal, an ethical value, an ethnic group, a territory, one's gender. This is not an individualistic identity, it is group-related, collective (the reference to God needs to be somewhat relativized since today's spirituality tends more than ever to be very personal and rather aloof from organized religiosity).

These collective identities can be open and engage in dialogue. They then interact with other identities. But they can also be closed, fundamentalist and hateful, thus excluding other identities. An exclusive identity leads to tribalization, fundamentalism, violence and a kind of "atomization" into various sub-groups. The only way out is to build bridges between those various identities. It is the State's principal new challenge to facilitate this. The State must not only establish a social contract in the political sense ("we have common principles on the rule of law and (in the best cases) a common social project") but also in the cultural sense ("we accept other identities; we consider them acceptable, and even an enrichment"). Only if the State succeeds in doing this will it ensure the co-existence of all these reinforced identities. At the same time it will be offering space for them to flourish. But the State's historical role has been one of erasing rather than encouraging variety in culture and identity. It is very difficult for the State to adjust to its new task. In the face of the State's crisis, civil society must become assertive.

9.1 A European identity?

Is there such a thing as a European identity? The answer is yes if we simultaneously accept that this identity is made out of various national identities. The EU reflects and broadens these national identities. Blind believers in globalization of the market may not like the idea of a European identity. They would prefer to see Europe as a large free-trade zone. To monitor and orient the market, a European political authority is required however. And to ensure democracy, this political authority needs a

well-informed European civil society, inspired by a clear notion of its European identity as one of the layers of its identity. “Unitas multiplex”. Why not be Danish and European? We do combine in one single person identities based on self, family and group, nation and religion. Why would the EU not be able to offer space for a similar combination?

10. Mobilizing identity

Strictly defining methods and tools to mobilize identity is probably a waste of time. Much will depend on the particular context, with its potential and its limits. Much depends also on the ability and on the social role played by the key actors engaged in identity issues.⁶ Some general guidelines do emerge, however, from the survey of the large array of examples offered by the participants in this project.

⁶ A word needs to be said about the actors who played a role in the cases studied in this research project. “Key players” are said to be: - committed youngsters in Sicily and young native academics and returnees in the Algarve, Portugal, as well as local authorities in that region albeit at a later stage; - a cultural movement launched by young local people in the “Pays Cathare” of Southern France, after which local and regional authorities as well as the professionals of the hotel and wine “industry” followed; - a local business-oriented development agency in Wales; - cultural groups working on a voluntary basis in the Hainaut, Belgium; - local press, local city administration and university students in Rijeka, Croatia; - religious leaders in the case of Cambodia, Haiti and Kivu in Congo; - traditional chiefs among the indigenous communities of the Mapuche (also among Hunde, Negrito, Badjao peoples) and local groups realizing that their Mapuche identity is weakening and are determined to decide on the future of their society on the basis of a selection process between outside (Chilean) influences and indigenous heritage; - armed movements based on ethnic or religious identity in the Philippines or Congo and a political movement in Mexico for which violence was only a brief “publicity” stunt; - political parties or movements either promoting nationalism and/or exclusive ethnicity in Hungary or people-based sovereignty in Scotland and inclusive localization in Central America. Some of the leaders mentioned here can be considered as “incarnated” or “organic” intellectuals. By that term is meant people who place their intellectual background at the disposal of local communities in order to help them to articulate their vision and/or identity and to convey this to the outside world. Both indigenous or non-indigenous people are said to be able to play this role. Referring to the Zapatista movement in Chiapas (Mexico); the role of *subcommandante* Marcos is noteworthy as he tries to articulate identity among indigenous people and for the outside world. He contributes strongly to “the local affirmation of differentiated cultural identities.”

10.1 Identity based on culture or on territory?

The experience shows that a policy geared towards mobilizing identity can focus either on a given cultural content such as language, ethnicity, etc., or on local territory. Examples of approaches based on ethno-linguistic identity can be observed in various places such as Catalonia (Spain), Mapucheland (Chile), Wales (U.K.), Haiti, Congo, Cambodia, etc. Several examples of identity, based on a common culture, have been discussed in the former sections of this report. Here are a few more.

In Haiti, the Slave-Route Project created awareness and solidarity by reviving the memory of the slave trade throughout the Caribbean region. It helped unveil hidden aspects of history and achieve a better understanding of self and of the other.

In the case of a traumatized, shattered and unorganized community of Khmer farmers repatriated from the border after the Pol Pot dictatorship and massacres, it was felt important to find out who still had some cohesion with others in the group. One could then further build on these links to stimulate and encourage all kinds of initiatives.

Traditional fishermen in Southern Rio State (Brazil) used to refer to themselves as a strictly endogenous group. The need to organize in order to face new challenges led them however to broaden their own definition of who are to be considered as “local fishermen”. They added in the by-laws of their association that any person being an “artisanal fisherman”, having lived in the area for at least ten years and having voted in the municipality elections for at least five years would be considered “a local traditional fisherman”. Thus, a phenomenon of “renewed identity” is to be observed. It was made possible by a shift from stressing endogenous tradition (culture) to focusing on the local place (territory).

The other type of approach focuses on territory rather than on culture. It pays attention to local bonds and to the landscape and built heritage, etc. of the territory. Examples from the EU (Portugal, Italy, Wales or Provence) show how economic revitalization is sought through focusing on the territory as such. Thus, within the Leader program, identity is approached as “a feeling of belonging and adhesion by a given population to its territory, in view of a common project”.

Thus, in the Algarve region of Southern Portugal, a main obstacle to development was the very negative self-image of the peasants and the rejection by themselves of all the symbols of local rural life which had

become equated with exploitation and a hard life. Economic dynamism is hampered when identity carries negative connotations. To restore pride is then a key factor if the local economy is to become more dynamic. Cultural activities were launched as well as awareness-building programs in order to allow people to re-appropriate their identity in a positive way. The quality of the local Algarve products was improved and new products related to rural tourism were created.

In the isolated “Pays Cathare” region of Southern France, the old historical identity did not function as an economic asset. A successful effort to redefine, innovate and value the local identity was launched, referring to an ancient religious movement which had been persecuted by centralizing kings. The theme of local Cathare identity became a core concept for the economic renewal of the region. Thanks to this “new” area-based identity, tourism and wine production thrived. A key element is that the choice of “Pays Cathare” as the main component to create an identity includes all inhabitants, even the newcomers. Interestingly, the “Pays Cathare” of today has not much to do with the old-time Cathare culture. The actual Cathare movement has long since disappeared. One seemingly lasting cultural trait is probably peoples’ proneness to resistance. What is still there is the landscape characterized by castles overlooking the valleys.

Similar examples can be drawn from the town of Noto in Sicily. New pride was drawn from the awareness of the beauty and antiquity of the main church and the surrounding district. This helped to create jobs.

The resistance to what is seen as British/English “imperialism” in South Gwynedd (Wales, UK) was based on territory as much as on language. This led to job creation in various fields (cultural tourism, education, translation).

10.2 “Localization”, not parochial localism

The insistence of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, on localized identity is said to lead to a new vision and practice of grass-roots democracy and of international solidarity.

They claim that local autonomy for culturally differentiated entities allows not only government but also such things as land tenure, self-defence and administration of justice, as well as a convivial notion of the good life, to be defined according to local identities. Zapatistas are said to resist any attempt to translate such autonomy into nationalist or

fundamentalist struggles. They combine “localization” and a world-wide coalition against neo-liberal globalization.

“*Localization*”, as a fundamental definition of the Zapatista movement, is the opposite of *localism*. Because the Zapatistas are aware of the forces affecting their country, they articulate their local liberation project with people from all over the world. This view seems to be the opposite of the parochialism said to be affecting Haitian nationalism. Zapatistas claim to be opposed to fundamentalism. They are opposed to “ghettoization”, that is to subsuming local identities into a regime for minorities. Democratic localization and regional self-reliance are harnessed against the dictates of market and state.

10.3 Soil and soul

The Scottish national movement (at least as it is represented by two participants in this present research project), seems to offer a meaningful answer to world challenges and local demands for more participation. The Scottish national movement opposes local cultural values being trampled on by the insensitivity of a globalized Anglo-American monoculture. Fearing “the reduction of our country to a product”, a group of Glasgow Christian ministers favor local autonomy based on a sense of belonging. They do not want local values of hospitality to be violated by xenophobia. They handle a concept of identity which is inclusive, tolerant and open to non-natives, as was mentioned earlier in this text. Both authors reporting on Scotland insist that, in their view at least, the sense of belonging promoted by Scottish nationalist feeling should be opposed to racism and divisive emotionalism. One of the Scottish participants insists that the new-found (relative) sovereignty of his region should not be grounded on “blood”. Scottish autonomy is to encourage a sense of place, not a sense of race. What matters is “to belong”. The struggle for identity is therefore more ethical than ethnic. Whether one is a Pakistani, a Scottish or an African Scot is immaterial, provided one feels involved in caring for the common good. Soul ought to be more important than the Nazi-tainted “blood and soil” slogans. This is why Scots in Scotland tend to find Scots in America embarrassing: the latter are emphasizing tribal identity, divorced from every aspect of place and modern Scottish popular culture. Their ethnic consciousness based on genealogy seems a false consciousness. A Scottish woman answers an enquiry as to her nationalist feelings: “We are different from the English but should not hate them”.

10.4 Territorial identity safer than ethnicity

To conclude, it seems that, seen from the perspective of enhancing the chances of democracy, the basic choice is between elements leaving room for inclusion, tolerance and openness to newcomers or, on the contrary, elements reserved to certain citizens and which favor exclusion and division. The definition (creation) of an identity should give space for newcomers and allow the appropriation of that identity by non-natives. This implies that insisting on local, territorial identity is safer than ethnic or cultural identity. The formation of collective identities based on race, ethnicity, language or other such elements may be necessary yet it entails risks of intolerance. People may then make a distinction between the group they (feel they) belong to and others they do not belong to, between “us” and “them”. The others, the strangers, are then, as in the opinion of authors like Samuel Huntington, bound to be seen as enemies. This pessimistic suggestion is challengeable. Differences may be experienced as complementary. In any case, openness, tolerance and inclusiveness must be imperatively present in a people’s sense of identity, if participatory democracy for all is to be achieved and if violations of human rights, racism and war are to be avoided.

A lively example of what is being put forwards here is the Brussels “Zinneke Parade”. A huge peoples’ parade was organized to promote awareness of the mixed character of this capital city. The parade offered an opportunity for inhabitants to express with humor their Italian, Turkish, Belgian, Greek, Moroccan, Spanish, Congolese, French, Senegalese or Polish origin. No control was exercised on the message proclaimed by each community. Yet, the official focus on the “bastard” (“zinneke” in local dialect) character of city culture was an effective way of barring racist or xenophobic messages. This parade helped reinforce Brussels’ identity as an open, inclusive and lively place for all to live in.

Regions become new social constructs which lead to political and economic dynamism. It is the area which serves as a base for social cohesion, trust and partnership. The ideal is to seek partnership across cultural or ethnic boundaries, which entails a common public authority and common programs without ignoring specific communities and their own priorities for that matter.

It is fair to add that regional identity is sometimes used not only to enhance local pride and dynamism, but also to curtail existing links of solidarity with neighboring regions which are (still) part of a broader State.

In Belgium (Flanders), Northern Italy (Padania) and Northern Spain (Catalonia), nationalist parties seek far-reaching autonomy if not independence not only to strengthen their cultural identity but also in order to put an end to what they see, some say rather egoistically, as a burdensome solidarity with less developed or less dynamic parts of the State. The same happened in the Czech Republic wanting to get rid of less affluent Slovakia. Similarly, Slovenia chose to quit the less “modern” states of Yugoslavia, and it was richer Singapore which parted from Malaysia. And it was the three richer nations, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, which first took the initiative to provoke the end of the USSR as a geopolitical entity. In those cases, the role of regional identity is very ambivalent indeed.

10.5 Overcoming the fear of change

People need to be reassured that there is nothing wrong about change, on the contrary, and that flux, evolution and change are part and parcel of life and culture. “One of the best traditions”, writes a Mexican participant, “is that of changing the tradition in the traditional way, to adjust it to new predicaments, contexts or initiatives”. Identity, far from being static, is rather to be seen as the “organising centre for the capacity to react to external events or to internal initiatives, both to articulate ideas - people’s discourse - and to structure the collective action”. A lively identity will allow a people to choose the type of change (at least to some degree, and as far as the outside context allows) and to orient it as far as possible. Changes are adapted or rejected according to the “internal rules of the local culture”. Robert Vachon refers to these fundamental internal rules defining thinking and behavior, as the “encompassing myth”, that is the worldview and what shapes the interpretation of reality. People use their “autonomy” to change those rules which, once incorporated, become a fundamental rule (“ontology”) for the next generation. Conversely, low identity may not be able to cope with change and may leave people exposed to brutal acculturation and alienation. This is when fundamentalism and other extremist forms of reaction may ensue. Yet, freezing a given state of one’s identity and rejecting any idea of change is not the hallmark of identity but rather the signal of an identity’s decay.

Extremist fundamentalists however tend to reject the idea of change at least in large parts of their identity. They obsessively cling to one particular stage in the evolution of their culture. They dream about a “pure” identity which often does not exist.

10.6 Awaking “the sleeping energies”

Resistance to what oppresses, exploits or alienates can be either reinforced or weakened, depending on peoples’ consciousness. Awareness-raising helps to attain some sense of psychological security. It may help to achieve some power and a certain quality of appreciation by others. It helps to be reckoned with, and taken into account. In Brazil, Paulo Freire’s conscientization method was applied to help “problematize” a situation, that is to induce people to see the obstacles on the way to a better life as factors to be analyzed and removed. This conscientization method is devised to do away with a fatalistic “culture of silence” and to encourage people to speak out, to formulate their aspirations and to embark upon specific action in order to achieve the desired results.

The municipality of Tepoztlan (Morelos) in Mexico offers an example of successful and stubborn resistance based on a process of “conscientization”. A high speed train from Mexico City, and later a hypersophisticated complex with golf course and advanced technology for managers of multinational corporations were seen as threatening projects by the inhabitants of Tepoztlan, both traditional ones and newcomers. Their opposition was not a battle for maintaining the status quo or clinging to the past but an effort to improve the town and introduce or orient change “in their own way and after their own decision”. It was a question of awareness, of autonomy and of dignity by not surrendering one’s soul blindly to development or modernity. No globalized dream of progress could move them away from deciding their destiny for themselves, from defining what to them would be a good life.

In the State of Oaxaca, Mexico, continuous resistance by sixteen different indigenous tribes during the last five centuries of external colonialism (Spanish or Mexican) led to strong awareness of their existence, their dignity and their rights. This in turn led to recovering 80% of their land. They achieved this through forms of land tenure fitting to their traditions and by giving continuity to their cultures, including in the field of local government. Still, domination forced them to find refuge in small entrenched communities. It was thanks to the example of the Zapatista struggle that they increased their self-awareness, widened their visibility and secured more local autonomy in terms of law, administration of justice and self-rule. What is noteworthy is that the affirmation of their identity and local autonomy go together, in the case of Oaxaca tribes as in the case of the

Zapatistas, with “pluralism, spirituality, ecological enduring and conviviality”.

In a Swiss Alpine village, a newly defined local identity has helped the inhabitants to overcome resignation. It took long discussions before gradually a new sense of pride and of the future could be instilled. People were invited to reject mere imitation of the urban “model” and blind submission to the way urban dwellers impose their own needs as well as their own dreams and fantasies about life in the mountains. Tourism was welcome but not solely as an imposition by developers keen to make money without respect for the local ways and aesthetics. This village identity has helped local people to “feel comfortable with what they are” and to change according to their own priorities.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Mai-Mai insurgency offers an example of identity-based armed resistance. But the Hunde identity on which this movement seems partly to be based is not only providing strength to armed resistance. One observes an attempt to encourage non-violent action based on awaking the “sleeping energy” of the Hunde. The Hunde had themselves neglected their identity and were in turn denied their own identity. This weakness is explained by the fact that they lost their king in the 1930s and that they were forced to accept large numbers of Rwandese immigrant settlers on their territory. Today Hunde people are facing what they call “a cultural aggression”. They refer to facts such as facing negative stereotypes about them, hearing foreign languages on their local radio, observing the fact that pastoralism is becoming the leading economic activity (whereas they were agriculturalists). Among the stereotypes carried by immigrants about autochthonous Hunde are their so-called laziness, lack of education and the fact that they are “no more existing on the map”. A Hunde-based NGO intent on favoring economic development among the Hunde, chose to concentrate on their “sense of existence”. Socio-tribal organizations sprang up and strengthened assertiveness, hence resistance. This resistance to the annihilation of their identity as Hunde and to their gradual economic and political marginalization by Rwandese immigrants is not leading to generalized violence, far from it. The Hunde movement encourages tolerant cohabitation in their region’s capital city, Goma. Their leader is proud to state that no other provincial city in the Congo is as pluri-ethnic and peaceful. Nevertheless, he wonders at times: is this peacefulness a sign of colonization of the Hunde (hence of their weakness) or, on the contrary, is this to be seen as a demonstration of Hunde self-confidence and tolerance based on their very identity?

It is worth mentioning that the idea of awakening the “sleeping energy” among the Hunde of Congo is rather reminiscent of what happened in the Sicilian town of Noto which was known to be a “sleeping beauty” until locals started to draw pride and dynamism from its architectural beauty.

10.7 Using action research and “cultural psychotherapy”

The island of Eigg in Scotland went through a systematic, dramatic and successful campaign for land reform and economic self-reliance. This offers interesting methodological hints. The power of landlordism was first “named”, that is made visible. Then it was “unmasked” in order to help people to become conscious of the fact that they had internalized a feudal identity. This false identity was gradually rejected and replaced by a sense of belonging rightfully to the island. This in turn helped to challenge the feudal links. Landlordism was finally “engaged”. In the process, participatory action research (P.A.R.) was used as well as testimonies by outsiders having gone through similar experiences. Thus, a native American militant was invited onto the island to testify about courage and social struggle in America.

This campaign is said to have achieved “cultural psychotherapy”. It worked like a therapy in a family by helping all members to see what had really happened. Careful attention was given to forgiveness. Cohesion was achieved by stressing place, equality, inclusion and forgiveness. While Celtic culture was referred to, it was only used to instill pride and confidence in the inhabitants and to draw attention to the fact that the landlord was from a different cultural background (English). This did not lead to hostility to newcomers originating from a non-Celtic background as long as they accepted to live on the island on a basis of equality. Cherishing and being cherished by the place was the key criterion for inclusion.

The use of culture in the Scottish example is particularly interesting as it comes to supplement, broaden and reinforce the more analytical and intellectualizing part of the action, that is the participatory action research. Next to these mental activities based on reason, emotions can play an important part. Poetry brings to the fore unconscious emotions and forgotten memories. More generally, the symbolic aspect of language is very important in mobilizing identity. In Scotland, much use was made of poetry and music to restore a sense of assertiveness as to one’s local identity. Some refer to three types of intelligence: the intellectual, the emotional and the spiritual intelligence respectively based on reason (*logos*), warmth (*eros*)

and depth (*mythos*). A holistic approach to knowledge implies enough attention to all three dimensions.

11. Identity: hope or threat?

To conclude, identity is both a source of hope and a threat. Because it addresses depth and emotions, it contains a lot of energy which may lead either to creativity and openness or, conversely, to defensiveness and exclusion. An open identity can be seen as a narrative process with a concern for relationship, meaning and the quest for common well being. A closed identity is related to the description of a static content leading to isolation, resentful opposition and, possibly, violence. The latter may cause violation of human rights and dictatorship. The former has to do with emancipation and responsible democratic citizenship. A key sentence for this debate is the quote from a woman in Chiapas who was referring to her restored sense of identity: "Now we have hope. And that changes everything". The participant reporting on the Leader projects supported by the European Commission concludes in the same way: "This focus on identity is not to be confused with traditionalism: it implies a change of mentality"⁷.

⁷ This synthesis is made on the basis of the written and oral contributions of more than 20 participants. It has been written by Thierry Verhelst who is solely responsible for this ultimate version (former drafts have been corrected by all participants).

Balkans Versus Southeastern Europe

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The terms “Balkans” and “Southeastern Europe” have been rather widely used and discussed in the last decade of the 20th century, often in controversial ways. The origins of both terms still remain uncatalogued to a certain extent and thus “an issue of political and spiritual geography”¹ that depends too much on the present emotional and political interpretations testifying to a deep and long-lasting regional identity crisis. Let us look briefly into the history of these terms and notions.

Balkan appears to be the name of the mountain (ancient Haemus, and later, in Bulgarian, Stara Planina). In her extensive and detailed overview of the name of the Balkans, Maria Todorova² describes the history of knowledge and understanding of the “Balkans” and tells the reader that the word is the name for bare cliffs, that it is of Turkish origin and that it replaced the ancient (Greek) name of Haemus. It entered the peninsula with the arrival of the Ottoman Turks. However, it took a few centuries to apply the name of the mountain to the idea of the peninsula and to understand the shape and character of the peninsula itself. The geographical perception of the area remained unclear for centuries because of the lack of geographical knowledge, but also, and perhaps mainly, because both the Turks and the Europeans regarded it as a kind of peripheral, as something “in between” the Western and the Eastern world.

In his work *Goea*, published in 1808, the German geographer August Zeune was the first to apply the name “Balkan” to the idea of the peninsula, as he was convinced that the mountain of Balkan was spread all over the

1 Pippidi, Andrei, A Plea for the Study of Southeastern Europe, <http://www.unc.edu/depts/europe/conferences/ACLS98>

2 Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans*, OUP, 1997, pp. 1-37.

region. The French geologist and geographer Ami Boué correctly described the mountain in the 1830s and also called it by the name of “Balkan”, and not the Old Mountain (Stara Planina), which is its Bulgarian name. European authors of the time preferred to rely either on the traditions of what was taken to be the ancient knowledge, or, later, to their own national traditions. French and British authors used to call the region *la Turquie d’Europe* / European Turkey, thus linking its geographical and sociopolitical belonging.

On the eve of the Berlin Congress (1878) the term *Sudost Europa* was coined. Maria Todorova³ mentions that the German geographer Theobald Fischer proposed that the Balkan peninsula should be named *Sudosteuropa*. The name was introduced by “the renowned Balkan specialist, scholar and diplomat Johann Georg von Hahn”. The two notions, the Balkan peninsula and Southeastern Europe were used as synonyms. Moreover, for almost a century “Southeastern Europe” alternated with “the Balkans” and “the Near East”.

Although *Sudoesteuropa* was to become the “neutral, non-political and non-ideological concept”⁴, its destiny was to become burdened with connotative meanings in a similar way to the Balkans. The first scholars and politicians who adopted the term “Southeastern Europe” were Austrian and German liberals. The Berlin politicians and officials used the term *Mitteleuropa* instead, which marked an intermediary space between Germany and Russia, and thus only partly covered some of the “*Balkanhalbinsel*”. The Austrians cultivated the notion of *Sudost Europa* particularly after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (1907). In the 1930s and 1940s the supposedly neutral term was completely discredited. “*Sudosteuropa* became an important concept in the geopolitical views of the Nazis” (Todorova, p. 28) and a strategic point in the expansion of the German Reich.

Notwithstanding the geopolitical and cultural connotations and implications of the term Southeastern Europe, it is evident today that it also became a part of spiritual geography and in this sense followed the term Balkans. In the geographical sense, however, Southeastern Europe has been and remains broader than the Balkans. It encompasses Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, the European part of Turkey, Bulgaria,

3 Todorova, *ibid*, p.28.

4 Maull, Otto, “Landerkunde von Sudosteuropa”, *Enzyklopedie der Erdkunde*, Leipzig & Vienna, 1929, p. 299.

Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia.

A number of Southeast European countries opt for identification with Central Europe rather than with the Balkans or Southeastern Europe. Their geographical self-identification reflects today the spiritual background of the whole problem of their positioning in Europe and in the different value systems that it may stand for.

The gradual collapse of the Ottoman empire and the rise of interest in the area allowed for the development of different approaches and views of the Balkans. These followed national traditions of geographical, political, ethnographic and general cultural knowledge. It seems that the Anglo-Saxon, American, Turkish, Russian, German and French sources have almost equally contributed to the European interpretations of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe.

French and German traditions may be taken as illustrative. The conceptual differences between them seem to have persisted and have thus provided a strong basis for the development of the stereotypes of the whole region.

Thus the term “Balkans” initially related to French terminology, stresses:

- orientalism of the region (Turkish influences, close links with the Near East);
- intraregional borderlines perceived as ethnic and national;
- religions typical of the area: Islam, Orthodoxy and Catholicism;
- strong social traditionalism and dominance of patriarchal structures;
- territorial disorganization reflected in the persistence of feudal structures and small estates;
- peasantry is a dominant social structure;
- the region is underdeveloped;
- in the geographical sense it encompasses the area south of the rivers Danube and Sava;
- the region is seen as a “unified entity”.

In this interpretation the term “Balkans” alternates with “Sudosteuropa” in the understanding of the area as a region, i.e., a certain geographical, historical, and political entity. Internal diversification is accepted, but the overall history of the region is taken as the basis for possible standardization and stereotyping of it.

The term “Southeastern Europe” which stems initially from German terminology, stresses:

- the Western orientation of the area, achieved mainly through Austro-Hungarian and German influences;
- a regional concept similar to the concept of Central Europe;
- intraregional borderlines of a mostly political, commercial and spiritual character;
- religions typical of the area are Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam;
- social eclecticism reflects social modernization and westernization and it is perceived as being stronger than social traditionalism;
- territorial re-organization typically reflects the fall of feudal structures and evolving markets;
- the dominance of the peasantry is challenged by the strong tradition of urban life and the role of a nascent bourgeoisie;
- dependent development is seen as a prevailing mode of development;
- in a geographical sense, the region encompasses all of Southeastern Europe, up to the Carpathian mountains;
- the region is seen as a composite and not clearly defined whole.⁵

This interpretation of Southeastern Europe implies elements of modernization of the European periphery.⁶ It may stand for a more dynamic concept of development and integration of the whole region into the European Union, and thus offers a kind of post-neocolonial approach to the whole region. Being in a way more functional, it particularly stresses the lack of intraregional consistency and links.

It could be said that the “Balkan” perspective on the whole region points out elements like peripherals (of both Europe and Asia), underdevelopment, historical diversity, lack of internal consistency and communication. The “Southeastern” perspective stresses particularly the developmental dependency of the area, traditional underdevelopment and

5 This attempt at classification is rather provisory and simplified. It was used as an introductory illustration for the discussion of the understanding of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe at the course on “Redefining Cultural Identities: Southeastern Europe”, Dubrovnik, May 2001. I would nevertheless like to mention the article that inspired my effort to sort out different connotations of the terms “Balkans” and “Southeastern Europe”: Ristović, M. “The Birth of Southeastern Europe” and the “Death of the Balkans”, Association for Social History, <http://www.udi.org.yu/Founders/Ristovic/Birth.html>

6 Cf., for example, Berend, I.T., Ranki, Gy., *Evropska periferija i industrijalizacija 1780-1914* (European Periphery and Industrialization 1780-1914), Naprijed, Zagreb, 1996.

internal regional inconsistency. None of these elements are ascribed to either “orientalism” or “westernism”. The cultural history of the region, and its political history tend to be classified as the problems of the past, and not of the future. The region seems to be quite well known by now, and although its classification may still take more time and effort, the myths of both the Balkans and Southeastern Europe are practically unveiled. However, both the “Balkan” and the “Southeastern European” classification remain far from being scientifically rationalized. They both depend on the present cultural and economic influences and processes of redefinition of cultural identities in the region.

Conceptual differences between the “Balkans” and “Southeastern Europe” seem to reflect some similarities: the terminology in both cases is rather inconsistent; geographical borders of the region remain loose and they are not strictly defined; hegemonic influences are stressed (be they historical, like those of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, or contemporary, like those of the European Union, the USA and Russia). Analytical approaches to both the Balkans and Southeastern Europe are not clearly standardized. In both cases this is justified by the fact that inner regional differences are substantial and ever more visible, that the communication links are weak or non-existent, that there are serious fluctuations in intraregional trade and exchange of all sorts, and that the whole area is burdened by social disruptions, general underdevelopment and dependent modernization.

During the 20th century there have been constant efforts to build some type of political federation among the countries of this area.⁷ The most successful of these projects may have been the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918. Following the Treaty of Versailles, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established. Yugoslavia was proclaimed a republic on 29 November 1943, and a federal republic of five nations in 1946. The formal disintegration of this federation began in May 1991, with the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. The disintegration process evolved very soon into

7 The idea of a Balkan (political) federation can be traced back to 1844 when Ilija Garašanin in his work *Nacertanije* laid the foundations of the political program expressed later as a maxim “The Balkans belong to Balkan peoples”. The first Balkan federal alliance was established in 1866-68 (Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Romania allied against Turkey); the second in 1912 (Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro allied against Turkey); the third in 1913 (Serbia, Greece, Montenegro against Bulgaria). The Balkan alliance agreement signed on 9 August 1954 at Bled, Slovenia, provided for political co-operation and economic assistance between Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, and was preceded by the agreement on friendship signed in Ankara in 1953.

the war in Croatia and Bosnia. The crisis of disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation has not been resolved for more than ten years now. So far it has involved the intervention of the UN, USA and NATO military forces, as well as a number of diplomatic interventions by the EU and numerous individual countries.

It is precisely the crisis of the disintegration of Yugoslavia that actualized the issues of cultural identities of peoples living in the region and of the understanding of the whole area. Thus the "Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe" are questioned again, in the light of these transitional (systemic), political, economic and overall developmental changes.

In this light, the Balkans are burdened with very negative connotations. Stereotypes of cruelty, irrational, emotional and uncivilized behavior are ascribed to the Balkan heritage. The attempt to re-integrate the area economically, politically, and, perhaps, culturally has been strongly resented by the nationalist movements and rejected through the processes of building up separate national states. The EU strategies to establish peace and support democratization in the area are bringing forward an attempt to redefine it conceptually. Following such ideas, Southeastern Europe has been re-introduced to express the main idea of turning the whole area into an integrated European region.⁸ This process might help further rationalization of many developments and problems experienced during the war in ex-Yugoslavia and post-socialist transition of most countries from the region. Unfortunately, so far it has been practically induced through the direct political, diplomatic and military involvement of European countries and the USA. The attempts at self-definition of countries and societies in this part of Europe still remain disconnected and very diversified, but they also seem to be turning from the past to the future perspective. Thus the identification with the Balkans may gradually slip into the past and historical perspective, while the more neutral (geographical) and perhaps less connotative identification with the Southeastern European area may gain more ground.

Such a possible attempt at self-definition might develop as a political or economic project, and in a way correspond with the ideas of the re-establishment of Central Europe. The European Union itself supports

8 The EU has taken numerous initiatives along these lines. It may be said that these efforts culminated in the signing of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe on 10th June 1999. Most programs, projects and strategies for the region are called Southeast European, while the term "Balkans" has almost completely vanished and remains confined to issues such as historical heritage, cultures, cultural diversity, etc.

such a type of regionalization hoping to achieve gradual harmonization among different peoples and nations based on the affirmation of cultural differences.

In this respect, conceptual differences between “Southeastern” and “Central Europe” have been constantly invoked. The revival of both Central European and Southeast European regional concepts may show that they are not based on intraregional consistency, good links among the neighboring countries and peoples and an awareness of belonging to some geographical, historical or cultural entity. On the contrary, ideas of both Central and Southeastern Europe primarily serve the purpose of providing a political umbrella for the full emancipation of national states, national cultures and values, national languages, etc. Identification with a particular national concept is supposed to help integration into the European Union, and most nations in the area consider that they deserve an “individual approach” as a starting point for integration. Such an approach is sometimes blended with the idea of full self-affirmation and affirmation of the particular national values which are still considered as basics in the definition of individual identities. This may involve intolerance to other nations and national minorities, which is usually taken to be an obstacle to full national emancipation. A paradoxical situation is thus created: national emancipation may be interpreted as exclusion of others, and not as inclusion of a nation into wider multilateral integration.

Notwithstanding the connotations that the terms “Balkans” and “Southeastern Europe” involve, it should be said that the general process of democratization and transition in the area has to be blended with different aspects of integration processes, be they global or regional. Although Southeastern Europe is not constituted as a region in a contemporary sense, the Balkans can hardly be taken to stand for this concept either. The Southeastern European concept seems to be geographically more neutral and based on a flexible mutuality: promotion of trade, common development projects, sharing of infrastructure, etc., and in this respect it seems to represent a more open and more general option. Within such a concept the values of the Balkan cultural heritage, artistic specificity, regional diversity, blending of different cultures that have remained in contact for centuries in this area, and many other specific traits should not be marginalized.

Cultural Co-operation

Regional Cultural Co-operation: Croatian Position

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Introduction

In order to analyze different aspects of cultural co-operation between Croatia and the countries of this region, besides presenting the current status of cultural co-operation, it is important to articulate some obstacles to, and potentials for, the future development of cultural relations. Still, before elaborating the Croatian position regarding cultural co-operation in this region, it is necessary to address two questions that might seem simple, but in fact need some clarification before more specific examples are approached.

The first one is the definition of international cultural co-operation. Throughout history, peoples have always participated in cultural exchange, artists have traveled from one country to another or just created pieces of art inspired by cultures other than their own. Even in time of war, borders and front lines could never defeat the forces of intercultural communication. Culture sometimes helped in bridging differences but, unfortunately, in many cases it was also used as a pretext for violent actions. When we talk about *our culture* as opposed to *someone else's culture* we have to be very careful because often we are not even aware of all the influences that contribute to what we perceive as our tradition. This is particularly important in multicultural societies and countries where national minorities have for long period been participating in constructing a common cultural heritage, which is the case with most of the countries in Southeastern Europe.

Today, culture is recognized as an important segment of international relations, whether it implies relations between different countries, peoples or ethnic groups. Each country regards its culture as a tool for the promotion

of its own identity and tries to find the best possible means for protecting and promoting its own cultural traditions and heritage.

François Matarasso and Charles Landry, in the booklet "Balancing act: 21 strategic dilemmas in cultural policy",¹ write about the relationship between national and international as one of the dilemmas for the implementation of cultural policy. According to this text, one of the most important questions is how to achieve a balance between preserving and promoting your own cultural heritage, and at the same time accepting different influences and changes in your own culture that will result from such communication.

Another important question is the definition of the region and the perception of the term Southeastern Europe in Croatia.² If we think of a region as an area where different participants, be it countries or ethnic groups, share a common interest in co-operation, use similar languages, have similar cultures, history and/or political system, it is obvious that there will be many obstacles in defining Southeastern Europe as an exclusive region in which Croatia could find an association. The region of Southeastern Europe has more often been imposed or suggested from outside rather than as a result of the joint interest of people living in this area and this remains one of the major obstacles in our mutual relations.

Today all these countries share at least one common interest - and that is their quickest possible acceptance as member states of the European Union and what is more important the attainment of a level of democracy and living standards comparable to current member states of the EU. This might be a new starting point for "re-defining" mutual relations and probably initiating co-operation at a significantly different level.

International cultural co-operation: Croatian example

In the National Report on Cultural Policy, international cultural co-operation is defined as "an organized interstate activity based on

1 François Matarasso and Charles Landry :*Balancing act: 21 strategic dilemmas in cultural policy*, Council of Europe, 1999.

2 This paper was prepared for the seminar "Re-defining cultural identities in Southeastern Europe" and it is why the term Southeastern Europe is used to describe the region. However, it should be noted that in the introductory part of the Croatian National Report on Cultural Policy, Croatia is defined as a "country situated in the area where Southeastern, Central and Western Europe meet". Cvjetičanin, B. Katunarić, V. (ur.) *Kulturna politika Republike Hrvatske. Nacionalni izvještaj*. Ministarstvo kulture RH, Zagreb, 1999.

bilateral and multilateral agreements, as well as wide and diverse exchange and communication between different non-governmental organizations, institutions and individuals.”³ To describe these specific activities several terms are used, such as international cultural co-operation, international cultural relations, cultural exchange, cultural diplomacy or intercultural communication.

The program of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia for the years 2001-2004, titled “Cultural development and international cultural co-operation”, lists the following aims of the Ministry of Culture in the field of international cultural relations: *integration into European cultural streams; following the trends of European cultural policies; the promotion of new forms of co-operation and communication - partnership and networks; initiating procedures concerning the candidature of Zagreb as the European cultural capital for the year 2004.*⁴

These are just some definitions that do not reflect the true importance of this segment of the cultural policy. In general, we could say that a majority of the national priorities articulated as goals of Croatian foreign policy also apply to culture. This is why the EU segment is so dominant, but special attention should also be paid to neighboring countries and countries with significant Croatian diaspora. As one of the newly independent states in this region, Croatia still considers the promotion of its culture as one of the most important tools for presenting Croatian identity in the international scene. This is the reason why during the past ten years, international cultural co-operation has always been considered as one of the priorities of the national cultural policy.⁵

In order to be able to describe the operational aspects of this work, it is important to explain the division of responsibilities within the Government related to culture and international cultural co-operation. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia is responsible for co-ordinating activities related to international cultural co-operation and has a special department for international relations headed by an Assistant Minister. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the preparation, co-ordination and execution of

3 Cvjetković, B. Katunarić, V. (ur.) (1999). Ibid.

4 Kulturni razvitak, Review of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia; Year I, No. 2, November 2000, p. 4.

5 Comparative analysis of cultural policies of nineteen European countries shows that only five of them list some form of international cultural co-operation among main national policy priorities in the last five years. Source: *Cultural Policies in Europe - a compendium of basic facts and trends* <http://www.culturalpolicies.net>

bilateral agreements and programs, as well as for multilateral relations and regional initiatives in the field of culture. The Ministry of Culture is also the principal funding body that financially supports both the presentation of Croatian culture abroad and the visits of foreign artists to Croatia. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Division for political analysis, information, publishing, culture, science and education, headed by an Assistant Minister, assists in co-ordination between responsible ministries and Croatian embassies in the fields of culture, science and education. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the work of cultural attachés. However, there is no clear distinction between the responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, the level of their co-ordination often depends more upon individual willingness to share information rather than on a well-structured and defined system of responsibilities.

In general, international cultural co-operation could be divided into at least two major groups. The first one encompasses all forms of institutionalized co-operation such as bilateral and multilateral relations based on different agreements, protocols or programs. This group also includes other types of formal relations that could result from agreements signed between different cities or regions, as well as numerous other regional and multilateral initiatives or organizations.

Another group of activities related to international cultural co-operation takes place outside, or we could say parallel to, these formal channels. Its primary characteristic is direct co-operation between individuals (artists, researchers or other practitioners), in addition to cultural institutions, different associations, NGOs, festivals or participation in different networks built around specific topics. It is evident that these forms of exchange are today becoming more and more important.

Legal instruments and international cultural co-operation

One of the most common forms of initiating cultural co-operation at governmental level, though decreasing in importance, is through bilateral agreements on co-operation. These agreements most often apply not only to culture but also to education, science, media and sport. When signing an agreement, parties agree to promote all aspects of cultural co-operation, to enable contacts between artists, artistic organizations and institutions, to promote translations from one language to another, to promote research, to enable access to archive and other documentation, to apply laws regarding copyright and status of artists, etc. Up till now, Croatia has signed

agreements with the following countries in the region: Albania (1994), Bulgaria (1995), Greece (1995), Hungary (1994), Macedonia (1995), Romania (1993), Slovenia (1994) and Turkey (1996).

The agreement is usually followed up by a protocol on co-operation, lasting for a period of three years, whereby countries list the fields in which they want to co-operate as well as activities in these specific fields that should be undertaken during the ensuing three years. Croatia has protocols on co-operation with the following countries in this region: Albania, Slovenia, Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey.

Agreements and programs represent a legal framework for co-operation but cannot be the only channel for initiating cultural co-operation.⁶ Some countries have completely abandoned the practice of signing co-operation agreements, while some still insist on maintaining this sort of formal relation. It is evident that agreements and programs will have a reduced importance as other forms of more direct co-operation are developed. Still, formal, legally binding instruments can help in initiating contacts, especially if contacts have not existed before or in situations where there was no significant exchange or even direct relations.

Even though Croatia has signed agreements and programs with most of the countries in this region, there has not been a resulting increase in cultural exchanges. The fact remains that a very small percentage of what is envisaged within the program actually takes place. There are many reasons for this, but we can only mention a few.

The program is often drafted based upon a questionnaire sent from the Ministry of Culture to numerous institutions that asks if they are interested in participating in exchanges with a specific country. The consequence of using such a method is that some projects that were already negotiated directly between artists or institutions do not get included in the formal program on co-operation while approached institutions propose other, non-realistic projects, merely for the sake of "proposing something". As for

6 "The dynamics of international cultural co-operation are undergoing fundamental change. From being government-sponsored and controlled from above, exchanges are becoming more and more direct or horizontal. The shift of emphasis towards a freer networking by individuals and groups has not yet been fully recognized by governments, whose international strategies were designed for a different time and different geo-political realities. Changes in trans-national cultural co-operation need to be addressed with new policies". *In from the margins: a contribution to the debate on culture and development in Europe*, Council of Europe, 1997.

geographical distribution, projects are most often limited to the capital city and eventually to one or two other major cities. Usually, the most evident constraint is a lack of funds and the need to maintain a balance between the scope of projects sent to a specific country and the number of projects received from that country.

Multilateral and regional initiatives and organizations

Multilateral or regional initiatives and organizations play an important role in international cultural relations and if similar trends continue to develop, it is likely that they will become even more important in the future. It is not only those organizations interested in culture such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe that participate in this process, for, in fact, it is difficult to find any recently launched initiative that does not mention culture among its goals.

UNESCO had several projects specifically tailored for Southeastern Europe and many projects in the Mediterranean region. The Council of Europe, together with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, launched the MOSAIC (Management of open and strategic approach to culture) project in 1998, which was aimed at the development of cultural policy practices in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and also launched, or supported, numerous projects in the fields of culture, education, human rights and the promotion of a civil society in this region.

Several projects have been initiated within the Central European Initiative (CEI), The Alps-Adriatic Working Group, Working Community of the Danube Regions and the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII).⁷ Two years ago, there were several serious discussions concerning whether the Stability Pact should also deal with culture.

With no intention of disputing the results of some successful projects, the fact remains that unfortunately, many of these initiatives never receive serious funding. If there is some “seed money”, it is often spent on travel costs and *per diems* of officials who meet to elaborate project proposals. Still, at the margins of these official meetings, many practitioners and artists learn more about each other’s work and establish more direct links for co-operation.

⁷ Information about specific projects can be found at <http://www.min-kulture.hr> and <http://www.mvp.hr>

Co-operation between regions (counties), cities and municipalities

Another form of cultural co-operation is exchanges between cities and regions that can also sign different protocols, agreements or “twinning” projects between them. Some examples in Croatia have proved that this form of co-operation could be very efficient and oriented on the long-term. It often includes the exchange of students, community artists and amateur groups, but also encompasses relations between museums, art institutions or festivals. Even in this segment, Croatia seems to be oriented more towards the West, with the exception of good contacts with Hungarian cities and some cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Direct exchange and communication / networking

Last, but not least, it is important to mention the “non-institutionalized” form of cultural co-operation, which is probably the most effective form of cultural exchange. It is based either on direct contacts or knowledge about someone else’s work, projects or activities. Some examples include translations, inviting foreign artists, hosting exhibitions, participation in different cultural events and festivals, different forms of networking etc.

It is very difficult to give an overview of these forms of co-operation because there is no specific institution in Croatia that systematically collects such information. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have information about those projects that they have financed, or assisted in the execution of, but cannot provide an exhaustive list of projects with a particular country.

Primary barriers to formal co-operation between countries in this region

From this general overview of various aspects of international cultural relations between Croatia and other countries in this region, we could conclude that the formal basis for co-operation exists but that the level of that co-operation remains quite modest. It is therefore important to explore the obstacles that these countries face in communicating among themselves.

As was mentioned earlier, Southeastern Europe has never really functioned as a homogenous region and Croatians are not the only ones that have difficulties when trying to define their positions regarding this region.

This ambiguous perception of the region influences the current status of regional cultural co-operation. There are several reasons for this, but without delving into the past, we could mention a few obstacles that did, or still do, prevent countries from engaging in more dynamic cultural exchange.

The first one, and these arguments are not sorted according to any order be it chronological or by relevance, could be a lack of communication. Before the 1990s, due to political systems and the current serious economic problems common to all countries in transition, there was not much space for the development of rich cultural relations. Even when interest existed, it was difficult to approach potential partners and find the financial means to support the envisaged co-operation. Though geographically small, this region is very divided and it is often much easier to travel to Western Europe than to a city that is several hundred kilometers away. These physical barriers might be invisible from outside, but have a huge impact on intercultural communication within the region.

In the case of former Yugoslavia, it is necessary to remember the war and the fact that there is still quite a lot of hesitation regarding co-operation between some countries that were engaged in the conflict. Mutual relations are still marked with many unresolved questions such as the return of stolen cultural heritage, negotiations regarding archive documentation, interpretation of historical events or language issues.

Almost all countries in this region are still in the process of transition; cultural policies are being redefined and rethought and most countries have low to moderate funding for culture. In a situation like this, if there is a choice between launching projects within the region, or for example in France or Austria, it is likely that the latter option will be chosen. There is a general pattern that more or less all countries follow, and this is related to a strong desire to prove that they are, and have always been, an integral part of Europe. At the same time, there are demands and pressures from the European Union for the region to re-define its relations before being accepted into the EU and it is obvious that some strategy for resolving this dilemma has to be introduced.

Possibilities for improving international cultural co-operation

In trying to address these issues, overcome existing obstacles and improve international cultural co-operation, Croatia could turn to some suggestions

presented in the document "Strategy of cultural development of Croatia in the 21st century".⁸ It proposes the promotion of the "development of cultural co-operation as a developmental, multisectoral and multimedia activity with different countries and cultural areas". The strategy highlights the importance of the promotion of all forms of co-operation, equal treatment of all participants, affirmation of different approaches to culture and cultural experiences, openness towards cultural innovation including specialization and achievements in the field of cultural management, and support for non-institutional partnership in international co-operation.

It is important to look for new methods of communication rather than expect any major shifts in current trends of continued Croatian orientation towards Western and Central European cultural centers. There have been some efforts to use new technologies and networking in order to facilitate the free flow of information and the exchanges of different practices and experiences in this region. When it comes to distributing information, different networks could have similar tasks to those of cultural centers and, if well designed, could enable more direct contacts between interested individuals and institutions. Culturelink, a Network of Networks for Research and Co-operation in Cultural Development, could serve as an example of an efficient network through which members can obtain useful information and even look for potential partners for joint cultural or research programs.⁹

If we analyze different segments of cultural co-operation, it is obvious that some fields have unexplored potential and could represent a starting point for more intense co-operation at both the bilateral and multilateral level. For example, experiences in the management of cultural heritage sites, as well as conservation and protection of monuments, are fields where Croatia has already offered assistance to other countries in this region.

8 Cvjetičanin, B. Katunarić, V. *Hrvatska u 21. stoljeću: strategija kulturnog razvitka*, Zagreb, 2001.

9 "The intercultural community is larger and more active than rigid governmental and funding systems, limited by borders, can accommodate. Finding ways to link people together through their professional lives is the most effective way of promoting understanding and providing a reservoir of people who can combat mistrust." Mundy, S. in Gordon, C. and Mundy, S.: *European Perspectives on Cultural Policy*, UNESCO Publishing, 2001.

Interest in maintaining and developing ties with national minorities also remains an important issue that can help in expanding existing co-operation with specific countries.¹⁰ Croatian national minorities in neighboring countries have a positive impact on the dynamic of cultural relations but also different national minorities living within Croatia contribute to developing closer ties with their countries of origin.

The exchange of students and young artists proved to be one of the most successful tools in creating long-lasting relations between different cultural areas. Once again, any initiative tailored specifically to this region will have to compete with the overwhelming interest of young people to work and study in the large European cultural centers.

When analyzing statistics regarding international flows of cultural goods, we can see that some countries in this region have expanded the production of specific cultural goods.¹¹ It is logical to expect that the trade of cultural goods will become an important issue in mutual relations. These issues are of particular importance not only for creators but also for the producers and distributors of cultural goods. Cultural managers will be interested in setting up contacts in all the countries of this region, because staging an identical event at different locations can help reduce costs and therefore assist in investments for larger and more comprehensive productions. Full acceptance and application of legislation related to copyright and status of artist should be introduced in all countries in order to enable and promote this kind of co-operation and partnership.

Final remarks

It is not realistic to expect great changes in the near future, because the key objective circumstances will not change quickly. Cultural relations have been and will always be affected by the political and economic context in which they are taking place and it is important to remember that exchange is a two-way process based on common interest. If the countries within the region find channels to spread information about their own cultural products and cultural heritage, the natural reaction will be better co-operation and greater interest in all forms of cultural exchange.

10 Dragojevic S., *Promotion of Croatian Culture Abroad*. Lecture held at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, April 1998.

11 Ramsdale, P. *International Flow of Selected Cultural Goods 1980-98*, Division of Cultural Policies and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UNESCO Publishing, 2000.

The countries in this region have many times through history been exposed to some sort of political pressure that imposed different forms of collective identity and that tried to undermine specificities of different cultures - former Yugoslavia being an example for this. The challenge is to move away from such a concept and regard this region as a meeting point, and not as a melting pot, which could eventually lead to engaging different countries, institutions and individuals in a more dynamic international cultural exchange.

**Regional Cultural Co-operation in the Context
of Political Developments
in Central and Southeastern Europe
Case Study: Slovenia**

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1. Position and role of cultural co-operation in foreign relations

A brief introduction to cultural diplomacy is necessary since we have to bear in mind that foreign policy and international relations are developing in the international environment (society, community) which is - like the national one - defined by sociological, and in addition to that, by cultural terms. Especially for Europe it is characteristic that political goals in national and international relations are often determined by cultural identity, which is considered to be the foundation of national sovereignty. Profound and complex patterns and sources formed over the past two thousand years have determined and shaped the European political arena.

The dilemma is that policy formulated on the basis of cultural differences and similarities is more often founded on perceptions (self-perceptions or perceptions of others) than on historical realities and current events.

At the same time, however, international collaboration in the fields of culture, education and science and promotional activities is becoming ever more an integral part of the uniform foreign policy of every state, and as such depends on the strategic orientations of a particular national foreign policy.

The major changes within the organization of foreign policy in the last decades are:

- The broadening of issues dealt with in foreign policy;

- Decentralization or reduction of the central co-ordinating role of foreign policy;
- Increase in the technical nature of many aspects of foreign policy.

In connection with our theme I would like to comment briefly on the first of these changes, which is broadening of the issues. In addition to the traditional issues dealt with by foreign policy, other, specific questions arise, and this leads to the proliferation of foreign political activities in all areas and within all state bodies, which often operate independently. This fragmentation at the same time leads to the expansion of the foreign policy agenda and causes the problem of reduced co-ordination. There are multiple solutions to this problem, ranging from assigning a greater number of specific foreign policy tasks to competent ministries, to a more centralized type of organization with government agencies for specific questions. To conduct a political analysis of cultural diplomacy, it is therefore important to study the internal organizational structure of the bodies dealing with foreign policy issues, and their relations with other ministries.

Within this framework it is especially important for the newly formed states to determine and establish an organizational structure for the formulation and implementation of development strategies and to form priorities in international cultural policy and exchange.

2. Historical background

It would be rather difficult to understand Slovenia's current position in the region without at least a brief historical background:

- In former Yugoslavia cultural co-operation had a special significance in political relations with the outside world too, especially after the resolution of the Informbiro in 1948 and in the fifties when Yugoslavia became one of the founders and the leading states in the non-aligned movement.
- The special position and needs of Slovenia in former Yugoslavia derived from its geopolitical position (bordering Italy, Austria and Hungary, that is - two antagonist political blocks at the time, three different cultural and linguistic groups, and the minorities on both sides of the borders) and relatively high level (in comparison with other parts of the former common state) economic development.¹

1 Such a position was also sanctioned within the constitution (both the federal and that of the republic) from 1974.

- That is why Slovenia started to develop a rather independent form of international political and economical as well as cultural co-operation, mostly at regional level, starting with cross-border regions of Austria, Italy and Hungary in the fifties, and spreading the ties with other European regions later on (Catalonia, Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Hessen, Belarus, Georgia in the USSR, Georgia in the USA...).
- The highlight of this regional co-operation goes back to 1978, when Slovenia became one of the founding parties to the Alps Adria Working Community. In the 1980s the Vilenica writers' meeting of central European writers and collaboration with the Institute for Central European Studies in Trieste were launched.
- One of the important constituent parts of regional co-operation, which has today been re-discovered, has always been the links among cities and local communities and provinces abroad (in 1985, cities, municipalities and local communities in Slovenia maintained 130 such connections).

To conclude, a few observations regarding the state of affairs in 1990:

- Yugoslavia had 82 valid bilateral cultural agreements, executive programs have been regularly updated with 52 countries, it had special agreements with Canada and the USA and since 1987 it had been a member of the European Cultural Convention.
- The administrative system was based on the following: foreign policy was subject to the foreign office at federal level and secretariats (committees) for international co-operation at the level of the republics; the international cultural policy and programs were developed and conducted within the institutes for international cultural, educational, scientific and technological co-operation, which existed at the federal level and at the level of the republics. The Institute in Slovenia was closed in 1992 and its tasks were transferred to the field ministries.

3. Organization of international cultural co-operation and exchange in Slovenia

3.1. Government structures: Ministry of Culture, Foreign Office, working together with other ministries and government offices

International cultural policy is a component part of the national cultural policy. Our problems and difficulties have two main causes:

- The difficulties faced by cultural policy planners in the national area, mostly resulting from the failure to adapt cultural policy to the changes that have come about with Slovenia becoming independent, to the changed social and political circumstances and the new legislation in many areas, all of which touches on culture (taxes, social security and so on);
- Current organization at the level of government institutions involved in international cultural co-operation and promotion, which is similarly still based on the situation as it was in this field in 1991 (both in Slovenia and abroad).

The Ministry of Culture is divided into the inner ministry (Private Office of the Minister, Artistic Programs Sector, European Affairs and International Co-operation Sector, Finance Office, Legal Office, Analysis and Documentation Office, Cultural Policy Sector, Mass Media and Audiovisual Policy) and the wider ministry (including two component bodies of the Ministry: the Cultural Heritage Administration and Inspectorate, and the Archive of the Republic of Slovenia).

Most important for the area we are discussing are the Artistic Programs Sector and the European Affairs and International Co-operation Sector. The Artistic Programs Sector formulated annual and long-term strategies for cultural programs and projects in specific areas of cultural activity. This is the basis on which the international co-operation programs are drawn up. This sector is also responsible for confirming the regular activity programs of all the cultural and arts institutions whose activities are wholly or partly financed by the state. International co-operation activities also fall within these programs.

The European Affairs and International Co-operation Sector plans and co-ordinates co-operation with Slovenes living around the world and across the border, the promotion of Slovenian culture abroad, and co-operation with individual countries, international organizations and the European Union.

If we look at the overall government level in international cultural co-operation Slovenia is organized as follows: within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Cultural Relations Sector has the task of co-ordinating three (or four) government departments: culture, science and technology, education and sport, and partly also the Government Public Relations and Media Office in so far as it is involved in promotional activities. Co-ordination extends only to three areas: bilateral co-operation (agreements and programs), the Council of Europe, and the workings of

diplomatic and consular representative offices abroad, and is generally limited to the formal aspect of co-operation.

Nevertheless substantive planning and financing is ultimately the task of the individual departments. Each of the listed government institutions has its own department looking after international co-operation and promotion as a whole, as well as co-ordination with other departments. The formal aspects of co-operation in particular areas such as the EU or Unesco programs are also in the hands of the field ministries.

The co-ordination depends entirely on the personal ties between the individuals heading the field of international co-operation. There is no formal co-ordination body or agency taking care of that. This solution, in so far as it exists as a system, is not suitable.

3.2. Priorities

Bilateral:

- neighbouring countries;
- countries in which sizeable groups of Slovene immigrants and migrant workers live;
- EU member states, with priority given to those that are comparable in size and position;
- the countries of Scandinavia;
- internationally legally recognized countries that were formerly part of Yugoslavia.

Multilateral:

- the Council of Europe, specialized agencies of the United Nations;
- regional and cross-border co-operation;
- the European Union.

International governmental and non-governmental organizations:

- the incorporation of international governmental organizations and international NGOs, and professional societies and associations on the basis of the criteria and development needs in individual areas as they are set out in the national cultural program.

4. Cultural co-operation in the region and regional cultural co-operation

4.1. Bilateral agreements and programs

After gaining independence Slovenia unilaterally proclaimed succession to all bilateral and multilateral international legal instruments to which it was part as a republic of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia thus trying to maintain continuity in international relations.

However, the need to amend, adjust or replace at least some of these instruments, especially with the neighboring countries, was obvious and the procedures started almost immediately. I would like to point out that in the initial phases of Slovenia's entering the international community the majority of documents concluded during the first visits of foreign or prime ministers were cultural agreements.

At present Slovenia has bilateral agreements concluded with 33 states. Amongst them the following are from Central and Southeastern Europe:

Albania:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1993; executive program 1999-2002.

Austria:

Agreement has been negotiated since 1992/93; the "cultural" part has been agreed upon, some open problems still remained unsolved until the last meeting between the foreign ministers in March 2001 (the position of the German-speaking ethnic group/minority in Slovenia and the legal rights of the Republic of Slovenia concerning the Austrian State Agreement).

Bulgaria:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1994; executive program 2000-2003.

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1999.

Greece:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1993; executive program 1998-2000, new program from 2001-2003 under preparation.

Croatia:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1994; there is no common executive program for the three fields (culture, education and science), the cultural ministries of both countries concluded three year programs of co-operation (the current one valid until 2001) with the list of priority activities.

Italy:

Until 2000 the cultural agreement between SFRJ and Italy (confirmed bilaterally by exchange of diplomatic notes). From 2000 a new agreement on cultural co-operation. Executive program under preparation.

Hungary:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1992; executive program 1998-2000.

Macedonia:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1993; executive program 1998-2000.

Romania:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1994; executive program 1997-2000.

Turkey:

Agreement on cultural co-operation, signed in 1995; executive program 1999-2003.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia:

Agreement on cultural co-operation was initiated in March 2001 and signed but not ratified.

The nature and role of the agreements and executive programs is basically twofold:

- on the one hand they are instruments of international/foreign relations
- and on the other a legal framework for activities and exchanges.

As a practitioner in international cultural co-operation I would - without diminishing the importance of the agreements and programs - like to stress that the majority of co-operation is based on direct contacts and agreements; the real nature of these instruments is thus not to give a list of projects but merely to ensure basic rules and principles and to oblige the two partners to give priority to activities of special interest to both parties.

Cultural agreements and programs play an important role in foreign policy, though this fact is often overseen, because other specialized forms of intergovernmental relations are more in the front line. But if we analyze the short history of Slovenia and other new states in Europe we can see that the first steps in bilateral relations were predominantly conclusions of cultural agreements.

4.2. Regional co-operation

Several regional organizations with a more or less formal structure exist in the region, and all of them include cultural co-operation as part of their formal structure:

- Working Community Alps-Adria²
- Central European Initiative (CEI)
- Adriatic Ionian Initiative
- Quadrilateral co-operation (Slovenia, Italy, Hungary, Croatia)
- V4 (so called Višegrad Group)
- Working community of the Danube countries
- Working community ALP

2 The WC Alps-Adria is, apart from the Working Community Alps, the oldest form of regional co-operation in the region and the only one in which Slovenia and Croatia were participating independently even when part of former Yugoslavia. From this co-operation also stems the positive attitude in Italy, Germany and Austria towards both countries in the initial period of independence.

Slovenia is actively included in the first four organizations. Within the V4 there is a strong wish to establish partnership with the third countries, but for the time being there is a lack of financial means. The University of Maribor is a member of the Rector's Conference of the Danube countries and Slovenia has an observer status within some groups of the WC ALP, but not in the cultural one.

We can observe a strong consensus in recent times that a stronger regional co-operation among Central and Southeastern European countries is needed. I should mention above all the initiative that emerged in December 2000 when Austria convened a ministerial seminar on regional cultural co-operation in Southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean. The seminar also dealt with the role of cultural co-operation in conflict prevention and the idea was launched to establish a conference of cultural ministers of the region. The idea was supported also at the ministerial conference on culture and conflicts, which took place earlier this year here in Dubrovnik.

The second is the initiative of the Austrian minister for foreign affairs, which resulted in an informal meeting of the directors for cultural co-operation in the foreign ministries of the Central European region. The participating countries were: Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. As you can see, the selected countries for this so called strategic partnership are all candidate countries for the EU and could form an alliance within the EU during the accession period and above all when full members. The idea seems to have its roots in the experiences of already known and successful regional associations such as the Nordic Council. The basis for such co-operation still has to be developed and above all the interests of participating countries have to be clearly defined.³ For the time being the idea is mostly politically based and I could not give an assessment of its feasibility. The process has started and the next meeting, which will take place in Ljubljana next Monday, will probably help to clear the picture.

3 The Nordic Council obviously being a model for this initiative is based on the common history and shared cultural heritage which led to a roughly similar pattern of social development in the five Nordic countries and to the development of a common social, political, economic, cultural and environmental development model.

5. Expectations and results

Among the general goals of international cultural co-operation and exchange the following are predominant:

- The development of culture in the broadest possible sense through international co-operation and the creation of methods and means to achieve these goals;
- The promotion of Slovenian culture abroad and supporting the presentation of other cultures in Slovenia;
- The promotion of a better understanding and better relations between individuals, groups and nations with a different cultural background;
- Enabling an understanding of the contribution of Slovenian culture to the world community;
- Promoting bilateral co-operation through multilateral co-operation;
- Employing the limited resources to maximum effect;
- Determining the image of Slovenia abroad through cultural co-operation and the dissemination of information about Slovenian culture.

We could state that with the existing forms and the current level of Slovenia's involvement the above goals have not been entirely achieved. The bilateral relations are of limited range, because they are predominantly seen as a political tool.

Regional co-operation was not at the top of our interests but has been becoming a focal point recently. One of the reasons for such a situation in the past was that Slovenia, as a new member of the international community, was rushing to establish bilateral relations with the most important countries as soon as possible and - being limited in both human and financial resources - simply had to prioritize.

The second was that we simply felt that at that time it was enough to keep the existing regional co-operation at the appropriate level and to observe the development.

In the last two or three years we are more strongly involved in existing and emerging regional organizations. The growing importance of regional co-operation is the consequence of two major changes both in the international community and in the subsequent changes of national political priorities:

- The intensification of international contacts in specific areas and at governmental and ministerial level; as far as the latter is concerned there has been a growth in regional ties compared to the previous situation where we were mostly establishing bilateral ones;
- The promotion of a new aspect which is founded on the so-called cultural dimension of development; this is a trend that involves building in culture as one of the concepts of the development of society, which in the field of international cultural co-operation results in a growing interest in establishing and broadening regional co-operation.

6. Possible developments

After years of work and rather rich personal experience in the field I am still reluctant to give a clear statement as far as the change of balance between bilateral and multilateral (including regional) co-operation is concerned. Nevertheless I would venture to say that existing tools in bilateral relations are of a predominantly political nature and are losing their real substance and meaning.

The growing interest of governmental and other public structures in regional co-operation at all levels and all fields of activities clearly shows that they follow the example of sub-regional units and NGOs who have been leading the game for quite a long time. I am convinced that this is the historical opportunity for this region to develop its own identity and be able to stand for regional interests within the enlarged European Union.

To my mind Slovenia's position concerning the developments in cultural co-operation in Central and Southeastern Europe should be:

- To support in principle the initiatives for the regional forum (network of the cities, standing conferences of the ministers of culture, follow up to Graz and Sarajevo process...);
- The acceptance of an active role that derives also from its position in the Stability Pact;
- To redefine the position of cultural co-operation in the region in the framework of general national and international priorities.

Having said that, I must also stress that more or less institutionalised forms of regional co-operation can only be the result of an inside process and cannot be imposed from outside. Such a process can hardly be accelerated since it requests substantial social and political changes.

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Cultural Transition

Borders and Maps in Contemporary Yugoslav Art

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Sky/land
air/water.
River water/sea water.
Left side/right side.
One state/the other state.
Border. Border. Border.
(...)
To be neither up nor down.
With a hand of a dolphin, the other of a sea gull.
To be in a mist of salt and sugar.
To be endangered by those passing the full line.
To be in the cross fire of soldiers.
Border. Border. Border.
The wall is a border, and borders are many...¹

A map is a trace of the past, of history; it is a reflection of a given time, a record of a moment. The map reflects reality, or rather our understanding and perception of the world. The map creates the future - giving a framework to the life of a society, which the latter tends to achieve. The map has always been an object of desire and interest; it stimulates imagination and fantasies. Maps have also been objects of artistic inspiration, re-interpretation, objects of collage...² Through geographic

1 Zoran R. Novakoviæ, "Border", *ProFemina*, 7, 1996, p.34.

2 Thus Darija Kacic, Belgrade painter, said that "I find schemes, maps and patterns overloaded with fascinating poetics" (Zoran Božovic, 1996, p.72). Beside D. Kacic, many other Serbian artists devoted themselves to re-interpretation of maps (R. Reljic, N. Paripovic, V. Radovanovic). Still, here I will study only those art works that refer directly to the identity crises provoked by the disintegration and war in Yugoslavia.

meta-fiction, the artist of today develops a dialogue with time - a dialogue with the past, but also a dialogue with a future.

Starting with a thesis that for the contemporary artist from the former Yugoslavia the borders are the key artifact of our time, and a map is not just an object, but in essence a questioning of identity, I will try to analyze artists' attempts to create, to construct their very often completely different approach to mapping in comparison with the politically dominant one. The focus of my analysis will be the artworks of artists of alternative movements - but I will try to show how this "mapping" phenomenon occurs within elite culture (culture of the establishment, state supported) but also within mass, popular culture (promoted through both state and commercial media).

The obsession with maps in twentieth century culture has something to do with the fact that many empires, both real (Great Britain, or the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and imaginary (like the Soviet Union, which imploded without war or outside attack), disappeared in the twentieth century. Their collapse inevitably entailed the loss of old and emergence of new identities. Symbolically speaking, the processes of disintegration of identity were reflected in the tearing up and reconstruction of maps, as well as in the change of their use.

The most often translated and cited Baudrillard text in Serbia is the one which uses the allegory of simulation in Borges' story of cartographers of the Empire (they make such a detailed map of the Empire that it finally covers it completely, but with the decay of the Empire the map itself decays, in the end being torn into pieces).

"The territory does not precede a map. Today a map precedes territory - a map creates territory, and that means, if we come back to the Borges story, that what remains of the territory is slowly pouring onto the surface of the map."³

In the case of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the map preceded the territory, and created it: all the maps of our divisions, which at the very outset of the anti-bureaucratic revolution⁴ flooded this cultural space, became true in the dirtiest and the most blunt manner.

3 Baudrillard, Jean, "Simulacre and simulation", Serbo-Croat translation, *Gradina*, (Niš) 9-10/1987.

4 This is the term used to describe the populist protests throughout Serbia used to bring Miloshević to power (which had as a pretext Albanian oppression by Serbs in Kosovo). During this period of several years (1986-1989), many maps of ethnic divisions were created and distributed, proving Serbian or Albanian claims on Kosovo territory, Serbian claims on Krajina in Croatia, Serbian and Croatian claims on Bosnia, etc.

Yugoslav mapping - confirming cultural identity through elite and mass culture

In the beginning of the 1980s maps started to be created throughout the media: "ethnic" maps, "historical" maps - showing the picture of inner borders quite different to the actual borders between Yugoslav republics. Croatia till Zemun (suburb of Belgrade), Serbia till Karlovac (60 km from Zagreb), Albania till Skopje and Podgorica... all these maps were based on some present / past demographical or historical facts.

That obsession with maps and borders between cultures understood as borders between different ethnic groups, influenced the cultural policies of the republics, and both artists and cultural managers were stacked more and more within ethnic and republican (federal) borders. However, one of the first maps published to announce the splitting up of the country, took a more "cultural" than "ethnic" approach. *Mladina*, a provocative Slovenian youth organization weekly, published the map dividing Yugoslavia into western and eastern parts (according to the then common A and B zone division for marketing purposes: A - sophisticated west zone and B - east, Balkan primitive taste zone). Still, Serbian dailies and weeklies were by far the map champions. They were tireless in counting Serbs in every single municipality in Yugoslavia, and reprinting older and older ethnic or mass execution site maps, proving that Serbs used to be the majority nearly everywhere in Bosnia and Croatia before the second world war genocide. **The power over territories is understood as a basic social and state-building power.** This obsolete obsession with maps turned games with borders and maps into reality very soon. Thus countries first created or re-created on maps, with borders designed after various criteria, or even set up where no borders whatsoever had existed, gradually emerged in reality.⁵

It all started with a quasi-academic theory and ethno-territorial history, i.e. re-interpretation of history and facts, and ended with neo-folk songs, part of genuine Yugoslav mass culture.

5 The *Top List of Surrealists*, a comic TV serial created in Sarajevo during 1990-91, the year before the war started, in its ironical play based on the idea of the Berlin Wall, created in the TV studio a fictitious wall between ethnic groups in Sarajevo, a vision which so ruthlessly became reality when the siege of Sarajevo begun. This is one of the bitterest illustrations of pre-created reality, illusion preceding reality in the games of map, borders and creation of walls.

Neo-folk songs about borders and corridors became the very essence of aggressive chauvinist kitsch: songs about Sarajevo⁶, the Corridor (between the West and East Serbian Republic of Bosnia), Serbian Kosovo⁷. These songs tended to praise new borders as well as territorial corridors (paths 10 to 20 km wide and 80 to 100 km long, connecting parts of the same ethnicity), because anyway **our genuine borders** are “insurmountable and tough”.

National institutions of established, elite art turned to the Serbian tombs and Serbian historical lands: reviews, novels, films or museum exhibition programs, all of them dealt only with these issues, or they “escaped” toward eternal, general topics⁸. A simple visit to any bookstore could have persuaded a “naïve” visitor that he was in a specialized bookshop for historical research.

So, the reactions of the cultural public and establishment were various: since the time/space⁹ social framework of reality had been destroyed, each cultural model had reactions of its own. The culture lost its capacity to define itself spatially. Even in schools neither teachers nor the Ministry of Education dared to define to pupils the real borders of the State they were living in. The time framework became completely insignificant: days of national festivities referring to historical dates connected to the destruction of the Serb people still remained (i.e. 29 November 1943 - the day when the disputed borders had been established, which has stayed a national festivity till this moment, summer 1999) and at the same time people were supposed to celebrate the day of the creation of the new State (the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) which no one believed they really lived in.

It seemed that the reality of previous Yugoslav cultural space above all existed as a reality only in the consciousness of a few artists, and especially in those open to experiment, devoted to the search for a new sensibility,

6 "Whose is Sarajevo? Nobody knows yet, nobody knows yet, until the battle field decides it" (Baja mali Knindža, a Serbian singer from Srpska krajina in Croatia, who became famous only through this war song, and today no longer exists in show business).

7 "Oh, Serb, do not worry, there will be no border on the Drina river"; "The Serb rambles along the corridor, so the whole planet might see him."

8 The fact that the theater was overwhelmed with classics, i.e. plays of low political risk, is just another sign of a serious and deep identity crisis. The established artist and art institutions avoided speaking about “today”, the difficult time society was passing through.

9 Branimir Stojković, “Kultura i civilno društvo u Srbiji 90-tih” (Culture and Civil Society in Serbia in the 1990s) in: *Potisnuto civilno društvo* (Suppressed Civil Society), Vukašin Pavlović, ed., Eko centar, Beograd, 1995, p. 422.

those who saw both European and global artistic space as their own¹⁰. In fact, there was no such space either in elite / state-acknowledged or popular mass culture. In elite culture specifically, national/republican borders have been of significant importance (Ministries for Culture and Education have been created at the level of republics), and mass culture operated within the “virtual” borders of Zone A and Zone B, zones of Central Europe (limits of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and the Balkans (limits of the Turkish Empire).

The final political disintegration of Yugoslavia has made real what once were just internal borders: simple lines on maps became true borders, obstacles to human communication.

Alternative/experimental art scene

The alternative art scene was very strong in some cities of former Yugoslavia before the war: Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Novi Sad, Subotica, Sarajevo. Usually, these artists were grouped around Student Cultural Centers in each of the cities and there was mutual communication and exchange. Their openness towards contemporary concepts and art trends, their refusal of the banality of dogmatic socialist state ideology, turned them towards Europe, new media and new technologies. So for these groups of artists, the rise of nationalism and chauvinist hysteria through “mapping” and the war which followed, provoked the most bitter feelings and forms of resistance. Their reactions differed a lot from those developed on the official cultural scene or within mass commercial culture.

Lots of them emigrated, some became “apatrides” within the country, but some of them materialized their protest in works of art, aiming to provoke simple, ordinary people, but also the political and cultural establishment who were using nationalist feelings to stay in power.

So, what were the artistic results, forms of these expressions? First, their inter-media approach enabled them to transcend all the borders: these artists use performances, video art and other arrangements, complex arrangements, projects in process (like the group **Led/Ice Art** who had frozen their art works in a big freezer), or fax machines, geodesy marking and space design (like the group **Apsolutno/Absolute** project in Vienna,

¹⁰ In the text published in *Naša Borba*, Dušan Jovanović, a Slovenian and Yugoslav playwright and theater director, described how he had experienced the Yugoslav cultural space, and how that corner-stone of his artistic and above all human identity has been definitely lost.

Austria). In a word, these works of art tended to transcend all borders, both state and media ones.

Secondly, their ironic approach, their mockery of a cartographic obsession with territories, re-interpretation of maps (maps printed in all dailies and weeklies, maps that became unavoidable conversation topics, maps hanging in offices and even lorry cabins, next to pictures of Miloshević taken from the yellow press), appear as a crucial component of their works of art...

Here again the energy of the alternative emerges as a reaction and an attempt at a dialogue within a given political and social context (as in the 1960s throughout the world). Faced firstly with national mythomania, and then with the war atrocities, the thoughts and emotions of artists tended to find new and strange forms of expression and make new artistic breakthroughs.

But, the official press and media did not speak about or present these works. The independent Radio B-92 had to create its own cultural center in 1994 called Cinema Rex¹¹, to replace previous alternative art institutions, today turned into propaganda institutions (like the Student Cultural Center in Belgrade).

Maps in artistic installations and projects

Zorica Jevremović's project, maybe the last alternative project realized in the Student Cultural Center - *Bosnia and Herzegovina '92 - Human Traces*, brought about a real unity of the intellectual insights of an artist and a scientist, devoted to the search for ways to express emotions, an inner human cry of frustration in the face of the terror of war.¹² The project was multi-dimensional: an exhibition created by refugees from Sarajevo: *All That We Managed to Take With Us* (letters, maps, mattress, blankets, pail...); *Love Statements* (written on the blackboard for those still there, or lost for ever); *Mirror* ("I watch and write down what I see"), *B&H - Poste Restante*; a series of panel discussions, documentary and short movie projections, an

¹¹ The NATO bombardment served as an excuse for the Government to take and close both radio B92 and Cinema Rex in April 1999.

¹² "A six day long multimedia manifestation merging communities of Bosnia-Herzegovina (B&H) and Belgrade. Participants were artists from B&H (refugees), Belgrade citizens of B&H origin, rock musicians, artists and scientists preoccupied with the B&H themes, and all those devoted to B&H". (Press release, Students' Cultural Center, May 1992.)

exhibition of painters either originating from or emotionally tied to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Two months earlier, Zorica Jevremovic organized in the same space an exhibition of Zdravko Grebo (a Bosnian intellectual who participated in different forms in alternative artistic and intellectual dissident movements in former Yugoslavia) - *Art in Yugoslavia: From Now to Prehistory*. Making collages and interventions on the map of Yugoslavia, children from Sarajevo were designing the identity of their homeland. To that strange palimpsest of the new era in which many designers so often erased one and drew another border within Yugoslavia, the children added a new dimension: maps of Yugoslavia made from their hearts and memories. Thus, the maps concentrate facts and fictions in the form of a palimpsest. Since the exhibition was in the Belgrade Students' Center, the artists close to that institution also contributed: they re-cycled their earlier works of art, as well as those now belonging to their co-operation with artists from all over former Yugoslavia. **Biljana Tomic**, Center Gallery custodian, initiated three projects: mail-art, memories of inter-mediality, and the third - a real *homage* to **Marko Pogacnik**, a Slovenian conceptual artist, advocate of the theory of organic topography (in the seventies, Pogacnik exhibited a map of Yugoslavia conceived as a human body: the head was in Slovenia; belly in Bosnia-Herzegovina; legs in Macedonia, etc.). **Raca Todosijevic** paid *homage* to our common childhood and memories: *I am Tito's Guard* - the first song learnt by heart in the Belgrade Kindergarten. **Neša Paripovic** transformed the map of Yugoslavia into a snowball, a new object. Nenad Rackovic intervened on the map, adding four S in the form of a swastika (the four S are a symbol of Serbianhood: Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava, meaning - only unity saves the Serbs). **Vlada Markovic** drew Yugoslav TV channels on the map, as agents which had shaped our different views of both history and the future in pre-war Yugoslavia.

All the visitors, children, friends, even families, but also artists like Halil Tikveša, were provided with copies of standard Yugoslav maps and allowed to draw on them. A number of maps were made for the TV program *Alisa*, a TV program which connected ten cities in Europe at that moment. But soon maps would not be simulated objects, but a new reality...

Four years later, a video record, *Self-Video-Graph* appeared: Zorica Jevremovic showed what happened with the maps when the establishment - officers, politicians and academicians - got hold of them. By the end of 1996, the original documentary record was given a new ending with "actual" political solution maps since 1992 (Kutiler's plan, Owen-Stoltenberg's plan,

changing maps published in the daily, *Politika*, and finally with the map of NATO forces deployed in Bosnia in 1995). Thus, this video became a frightening illustration of Baudrillard's thesis that today first a map is created, and only after that is life arranged accordingly.

Dragoslav Krnajski's *Sarcophagus*¹³ is a project revealing the very essence of the frustrations of the people who felt that such disintegration of a country ruins their own identity. The author puts inside the map of Yugoslavia, and this is a symbolic act of a funeral of our common living, a funeral of identity. It is not simply the funeral of a map, it is a funeral of many illusions, youth... a definite destruction of borders and the meaning of Yugoslavia's existence. Maps of **Vera Stevanovic** were also "buried", but in the soil, and for the moment hidden from the eyes of the spectator, needing to be revealed. The presence of soil in the gallery was overloaded with meaning: it could be read/seen in different ways. What does the soil hide? Fresh graves altering the map of our country, burials of reality, or deposits of soil covering up crimes? Or maybe, just maps of rivers crossing all borders, which have inspired the author for so many years?

Once wide territorial spaces used to be the basis of identity of both society and the individual. Now, with the transition and undefined borders, the urban areas became primary spaces of life and identification, especially for those artists who refused ethnic identity as primary. Yet, even for them cities are not recognized as what they once used to be, as spaces of everyday life - but, as new spaces of freedom and imprisonment at the same time.¹⁴

Thus the artists created new city maps based on the old ones. The art of quotation - collage, appears as a dominant artistic form. For example, the group **FIA** resorted to Ljubomir Micić's¹⁵ poem *A Street of a Merry City* (1922)

13 From the exhibition "The Room With Maps", custodians: Branka Andjelkovic and Branko Dimitrijevic, Dom omladine, Belgrade, November 15-December 3, 1995.

14 This controversy is difficult to explain. Taking into account the embargo, the complete isolation of the Serb and Montenegrin population, the feeling of living in a prison was widespread. But, at the same time Belgrade squares and streets became the symbols of "free" space within Yugoslavia, free of nationalism - our "Belgrade Republic" - confirmed by the happenings in winter 96-97, which followed the writing of this text.

15 Ljubomir Micić is a vanguard artists from the 1920s. He communicated and published in his review, *ZENIT*, authors such as Malevich, Chagal, Kandinsky, Marinetti, etc. He himself first introduced the conflict of being a "Balkan barbaro-genius" and cosmopolitan artist at the same time (in the 1990s cosmopolite became a word with a bad meaning in Serbia - as xenophobia is the most widespread feeling of "a little man", according to W. Reich terminology).

as the model according to which they made a “sound” map of contemporary Belgrade.¹⁶

Rush the coaches of war nabobs
clop-clop-clop
Rattling are the shining cars of fat usurers
too-too-too
Over the crushed hearts and bloody disappears.

The group FIA had used a similar model of artistic intervention for a poster during the Students' Protest 1992: a smiling girl watching airplanes with the inscription “ENOUGH!” In its re-interpretations by different artists the poster reflected different maps of the sky - the future, visions of reality, the approaching horrors (exhibition in the City Cultural Center Gallery).

All the mentioned protest actions caused by the trauma of the bloody disintegration and division of the country belong to what might be called the urban alternative culture. Due to their challenged identity and suppressed “nomadism”¹⁷, many artists turned to themselves and their closest environment¹⁸: they deal with their mental maps and maps of the cities.

Choice of a city instead of a state or nation as their sphere of activity and base of their poetics of space, is first a question of political and ethical choice, and then of personal and individual view, or sensibility.

Biljana Srbljanovic, the most translated Serbian playwright takes into account cultural “luggage” and cultural spaces specific to the refugee student population of the 1990s making virtual maps of Belgrade in memory of those who had left. In her *Belgrade Trilogy*, she pays homage to the abandoned city, to the ones who now live in Prague, Sydney or Los Angeles. The maps of Belgrade written from memories and dreams of refugees are maps of everyday life, maps of escaping recruitment, war, poverty, feelings of disappearance - no future, but at the same time maps of happy childhood and youth.

16 New Year card of group FIA for 1994.

17 In the sense that Achille Bonito Oliva had given to that word during the 1992 Venice biennial, meaning the cosmopolitan need of contemporary artists to travel, cross borders...

18 The UN Embargo forbade flights from Belgrade, international trains, imposed visas for nearly all the countries in the world and put obstacles in the way of participation in all artistic and educational programs.

Branko Pavic presented his personal maps of a city - the borders of the universe to which he was pushed by war. Like Gaston Bachelard, who once saw the whole universe as a house, Pavic found his universe in the city in which he lived, and where each of us has a mental map of one's own - a map of encounters, friendships, relaxation, experiences. But events rapidly changed these old maps, constructed long ago. Three video works (by C. Vasic, I. Kucina and the group [kart) made for Pavic's exhibition *Images for Great Cities*,¹⁹ have clearly presented the situation. *City Night Lights* appeared as four black and white graphics of the painter's view (North, East, South and West), accompanied by four maps of movements - maps of the sky above the artist, maps of housing and work (the city, his studio, his Avala weekend house). The whole project was completed by *Small Topics for Great Cities*, cities that became our only spiritual and cultural spaces. City details: street lights, traffic signs, pedestrian crossings, were shot, then enlarged until they lost sharpness and all irrelevant detail. When only their essence was left, Pavic printed them as both universal and particular images. Though one could recognize in them a particular part of a given Belgrade street, or metaphor of the time, these works are worthy for their visual values, structure, rhythm of light and darkness, play of vertical and horizontal lines. The dark colors (black, gray, white, dark blue sky, metaphysical green) are colors of the period, a period of darkness and lost hopes, and still out of each work comes a cry of light, a cry of closeness with the city. Especially precious are works printed on hand-made paper, which as such bears the graphic structure and chaos of the city, being primitive and warm, cruel and tender at the same time.

Though predominantly visual, these projects entailed a very important role for music. Thus music of the group *Jarboli* connects the three video works from the exhibition *Images for Great Cities*. Talent's sound experiments give common ground to a number of exhibitions; music is also the key to urban understanding in *Zombie Town* (Belgrade DJs present their city spaces), a film by British author Mark Howker. The same goes for M. Maticevic and I. Markov's movie *The Ghetto - Secret Life of the City* (a Belgrade rock star follows his personal map of Belgrade before going to exile in Australia). These "sound maps" of cities have not remained simply as a background to other artistic genres - they also appear in genuine compositions.

Horror-struck with war, Bosnian tragedy, endless lines of refugees, and especially of Jewish refugees who were leaving Sarajevo at the beginning of

¹⁹ Exhibition in Cinema Rex, April 1996.

the war (thus announcing its future lack of multiculturalism), **Ivana Stefanović** composed *Lacrimosa*, tape music (1993, producer: O.R.F. art program). The composition is a compilation of Pergolesi, Mozart, Verdi, Penderecki, Britten, Sephardi songs, etc. mixed with street sounds (Sarajevo, May 1992, Belgrade, June 1992), the exodus of Jews. It faces us with the loss and disintegration of a sound map of the city under gunfire from the near-by hills.

“Full of tears, say all the prayers of the world. Full of tears is this music prayer of mine, dedicated to my Sarajevo friend”.²⁰

Also many theater plays were written, both in the country and abroad, questioning the sense of the war, ethnic cleansing, nationalistic madness. Some of them directly and some indirectly (through programmatic texts), clearly answered to nationalistic cartographic demands. Thus **Goran Gajić** and **Mira Furlan** wrote in the program of their *Antigona*, performed in the Hudson Guild Theater in Los Angeles: “We tried to remain what we are. We tried to protect our values, our profession, our minds. We tried not to surrender to madness. And then the killing began (...) We were defeated. And thereof that need in us who came from the late Yugoslavia, that our voice should be heard in this eternal story. This is our modest way to say: ‘Stop!’ Think of people, not of states! Think of people, not of nations! Think of people, not of allies and enemies! **Think of people, not of maps! Think of bridges, not of borders!** Our voice is almost unhearable, a handful of us is dispersed around the world, some are dead, some as if they are dead, but that tiny voice of ours had to be preserved.”²¹

Train as a border crossing symbol

Journey - expulsion, voluntary leaving, escape, accidental leaving... Airports were closed. The trains no longer connected East and West, North and South: there was only one destination - Budapest airport - the way out. No destinations were written any more on trains (the embargo stopped not only flights but also all the international trains).

The exhibition of Balint Szombaty²² presents train inscriptions as memories of an old country we used to live in, but also as reminders of new maps of destruction. Ladders put into soldier’s booths and the binocular

²⁰ Ivana Stefanović, Concert Program, Art Pavillion “Cvijeta Zuzoric”, May 29, 1993, at 20.00.

²¹ *Naša Borba*, June 17, 1996, p.14.

²² Dalekogled (Faraway look), Camera lucida, Images of the gaze, Paviljon Valjkovic, October 2-15, 1995.

through which a spectator might look into a black hole, a space bereft of future... The military outlook of a watchtower is an object which sees nothing, and reveals only a nonsense of its own existence. And the rhythm of tables, their seemingly banal content, faces the spectator with a number of meanings: the names of the cities we know from the timetable as stops on the journey to the Adriatic coast, do not evoke in our consciousness them and their stations, but all those we could meet no more, journeys we could never take again, the country we had definitely lost.

Of course, trains are still running across the real and imaginary maps, crossing borders, and touching cultures. The timetable Danilo Kiš's father was writing²³ could be a picture, a metaphor, a diagram... depending on the story context. The timetable is a metaphor of order, state, stable society. It belongs to the pattern of a society bereft of identity problems. The search for Kiš's father, wandering along the map of the Panonian plane following his timetable, is a journey which goes on for the children whose fathers are still doing the same along the maps of former Yugoslavia. And *The Encyclopaedia of the Dead* (by Danilo Kiš) demands a new reading.

In the summer of 1997 Belgrade saw the first international exhibition for a long time: *De Valigia* (on the first left-hand platform of Belgrade Railway station). The catalogue opens, not by chance, with Kiš's description of a dream before the train journey, a dream in which stations and cities are passing by, while his father utters their names in a fever.

De Valigia was a project by thirty-three Yugoslav artists who presented their visions of a suitcase - the journey or dream of a journey. On board a railcar leaving Thessaloniki (the cultural capital of Europe 1997) works of art were loaded; at other stations of its journey through Europe new railcars were to be added, and the whole train was to reach its final destination - Stockholm (the cultural capital of Europe 1998) by June 20, 1998. However, the symbolic content of the concept - new art and cultural links, the artist as a free nomad without a country, the optimistic concept of a Europe without borders, visas and cultural barriers - is substantially denied by the works of Yugoslav artists. For them suitcases are no longer just symbols of nomadism. On the contrary, they are conceived as symbols of suffering, a burden, inevitability and emptiness, and as Jasmina Cubrilo wrote in the catalogue, a nomadic spirit and cartography entail (new) co-ordinates,

23 In the work of Danilo Kiš, the father who is writing the timetable for trains was a *leitmotif*, not only of personal and family identity - but a symbol of lost Central European cultural space, and also of the Jewish community as a cement of that space.

(new) mutual relations and a variety of sometimes dangerous connections.²⁴ The suitcase of Balint Szombaty, shows the life story of a Serb from Croatia, carrying the flag and map of the SFRY, a copy of the daily, *Politika*, from 1980, announcing the train which brought Tito's body to his Belgrade funeral, and finally the license plate of a car registered in Gospic (one of the first cities to expel and kill the Serbian population in Lika in 1991, after they started a rebellion). The beginning and the end of the disintegration of Yugoslavia in one suitcase.

Only at first is one surprised by a number of *empty* suitcases (Bojan Mitrovic, Petar Lolić Dejan Grba...), luggage without any substance; Vesna Pavlovic's view of a leaving/staying or Zoran Naskovski's fading orchid, suitcases with invisible, forgotten tenants (Talent Factory). Their contrasts are the heaviest luggage - a huge tidy pile of *Politika* and paper to clean up all the dirt ever published in that daily (Radoš Antonijević), as well as a suitcase of bricks - a part of our wall from childhood that we carry for a life-time (Dejan Andjelkovic and Jelica Radovanovic).

Thus, from Živko Grozdanic's suitcase with all the railway stations in Yugoslavia in alphabetical order, via the opened memory suitcases of Zorica Kljajić, Mima Orlovic, Velizar Krstic, Violeta Samardžić... we finally come to a coffin - the tombstone of Bata Krgovic, to that inevitable end of all journeys, a monument devoted to all enforced journeys, refugee journeys of the twentieth century. The artists had obviously presented very different views of the world, life and wandering - voluntary and involuntary, endless and purposeless.

The other exhibition, *Transformers*, brought Vuk Vidor, a Parisian artist of Yugoslav origin, who exhibited red-white-blue bags full of soil, making of them a line of all world refugee experiences. The exhibition catalogue is made up of different photos of Vukovar, Rwanda, Albanian refugees... lines, with always the same sign - that same multicolored bag in which in a few hours, whole families were forced to pack their memories and their lives, to take them across the border into a new world. Even in the context of the works of the other two artists²⁵ (recycled, plastic, multicolored objects of uncertain use), Vidor's bags have a more real and cruel effect, and enable the spectator to see the parallel worlds: wealth-tired Europe, where artists criticize kitsch, the art of happiness of consumer society, on the one hand, and, on the other, this Europe which belongs to the Third World, which

24 Jasmina Cubrilo, Catalogue: De Valigia exhibition in Yugoslavia, Beograd, 1997, p.16.

25 Fabrice Domercq and Fabrice Langlade.

wanders around with its bags and its country in search of the so much desired but never achieved freedom.

Conclusions

This text wanted to present the way the disintegration of Yugoslavia has been reflected in contemporary works of art in all areas of creativity: from poetry to the visual arts. The obsession with maps, borders, ethnic cartography, had infested the media and the domain of culture in former Yugoslavia. From the map of Yugoslavia published in *Mladina* in 1986, through the maps of nations and regional ethnic groups subsequently published in the highest circulation dailies, the road was paved for the most monstrous of wars, whose aim was a new ethnic map and division of Yugoslavia.

These bloody maps were first born in the heads of national myth-making intelligentsia. Dobrica Cosic, the famous writer, said: "Bosnia will have many Andorras with Serb population". The more they were maps of land/territories, the less they were maps of population. The people have gone, been killed, expelled or forcibly settled on all sides, and mostly out of zones the maps prescribed - but still the borders have decided the fate of many. Each of us has designed a new mental map of Yugoslavia of his/her own. Places of our vacations, encounters, friendships, school excursions, military services, first pen-friends in our personal maps... have replaced the new ones - those that came to us through the media: Vukovar, Tovarnik, Trebinje, Rožaje, Omarska, Manjaca, and, finally, Srebrenica and Srpska Raca.

It cannot come as a surprise, then, that artists have begun to produce maps of their own - visions, maps of Yugoslavia as utopia, or deconstructed maps of its disintegration, maps cast in concrete, such as the symbolic burial of a map in a sarcophagus, shutting an evil spirit of hate and nationalism into a bottle.

Thus, this text analyzes borders and maps as triggers of artistic intervention or authentic artistic visions. The artist as nomad has been denied, his right to choose his homeland has been denied. Borders have been drawn over the real world and the artists have tried to step over them, to get out of the imposed world or to create their own world on new maps - maps of the spirit on which borders have no cruel reality but symbolic value only.

Looking at maps of Yugoslavia, what we see is a reality lost so long ago, but still the game with maps goes on: the last days of East Slavonia and Baranja with their borders are coming to an end; Bıko and surroundings are subject to negotiations; the rocky landscape of Prevlaka is still an unsettled dispute... parts of the Slovenian-Croatian border too... and who knows how many projections of maps of Kosovo and its possible division, how many maps of Sandžak...

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Languages With(out) Frontiers

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As the object of our interest will be the frontiers between languages, it seems that the best way to visually present the issue is by using a map. There are, indeed, at least two kinds of maps that could be used as a representation of linguistic frontiers and their relationships. One kind, better known to the general public, could be found in almost all contemporary atlases: on these linguistic maps the languages are exhibited as coherent entities, strictly delimited one from the other by clearly drawn frontiers and occupying defined territories, eventually with some “islands”, located within “foreign” areas and separated from their own territory. The languages look, therefore, like states, and their frontiers actually often coincide with boundaries between states; moreover, it is frequently presumed that linguistic frontiers are at the same time ethnic ones, mainly those between nations and occasionally between minor ethnic groups too.

Besides such a cartographic representation, in which the whole world could be parceled out into more or less homogenous linguistic territories, there is another kind of linguistic map, used ordinarily in the domain of dialectology or specific geolinguistic investigations. Unlike those general maps with homogenous territories, these consist of a complicated network of lines connecting points that share the same linguistic characteristics. These isograms (called in linguistics: isoglosses) indicate that the territorial distributions of particular systemic (phonological, morphological, lexical) features only exceptionally correspond one to another, so that different

idioms (dialects as well as languages) appear to be continuous rather than discrete phenomena.¹

Both models of linguistic diversity - one emphasizing homogeneity and discontinuity of languages and the other which stresses their continuity and unclear mutual limits - in a certain way conform with the linguistic experience of speakers. The speakers of any language are almost all aware of the fact that the through space sooner or later leads to a point (and all those points could be presented as an imaginary line) where radical linguistic change appears that makes further comprehension of the utterances expressed by local inhabitants impossible: moreover, in our perception this point is often placed on an actual frontier between states. On the other hand, linguistic experience also confirms that among all speakers, even inside the domain of one language, there are slight differences, which increase parallel to the remoteness from the starting point: the lack of communicative interruption between each two points in the space, in other words the continuousness of mutual comprehension, could largely surpass state boundaries.²

Paradoxically, at the same time it could be said that both cartographic models of linguistic diversity directly contradict our linguistic experience. For instance, although the area of the English language on the linguistic map of Europe is restricted to Great Britain and, eventually, to the Irish Republic, it is a well-known fact that, speaking English, one can communicate all over Europe. A similar situation does not result only from second language acquisition, as our example could suggest, but also from the presence of entire groups (e.g., immigrant speakers of Turkish, Portuguese, Croatian or Serbian in Germany) or single native speakers (temporary or permanent residents in foreign states, for example) of one language within the presumed territory of the other. The dialect continuum, on the other hand, as it is represented on linguistic maps, is itself a kind of

1 Geolinguistic theory asserts that a frontier between two idioms on such dialectological maps should be denoted by means of a denser bundle of isoglosses, but it does not define the density of a bundle (i.e. the minimal number of distinctive features) that makes the real boundary; isoglosses most frequently represent a situation with two or more focal points separated by wider or narrower transitional areas.

2 Crystal (1998, 25) quotes five "dialect continua", which surpass state boundaries in Europe: West Romance (from Portugal to Italy), West Germanic (from Belgium and The Netherlands to Austria), Scandinavian (including Sweden, Norway and Denmark), North Slavic (Poland, Belarus, Ukraine) and - the most interesting for our purposes - South Slavic (from Slovenia to Bulgaria).

construct, because it is based upon an observation that has to neglect a series of relevant facts (for example, almost all language uses of educated speakers or of urban population) and pays attention only to carefully selected persons. The best informants for dialectological investigation are, as it is often emphasized, older women, who have never left their own villages! If the analysis concerns a socially and demographically more complex population, the network of isoglosses becomes so complicated and crisscrossed that its informational capacity is minimal. Besides, our linguistic experience shows that a speaker who differs slightly in linguistic attitudes from us could always be found in remote areas, as well as someone speaking in a very different way could live in our immediate neighborhood.

The paradox that linguistic maps conform and at the same time do not conform to our linguistic experience could be easily dissolved: a linguistic map - and every cartographic model deals in the same way with its own objects - relates languages to territory or soil. However, languages are actually related to their speakers, that is to human beings, who are dynamic entities and therefore really inappropriate to be represented on a map that necessarily shows only stable spatial elements (settlements, rivers, mountains etc.) or elements seized in a certain moment (such as demographic or economic data). On the other hand, human communities are indeed not fully movable groups and mainly reside in certain territories, so that there is some reason to relate them and their languages to the areas in which they live.

Consequently, to understand all aspects of the relationship between language and territory or language and frontiers it is necessary to examine the real character of the community, the members of which are associated by means of a language. Such a community, that could be called a linguistic community, consists of all speakers of a certain idiom who recognize their communicative and symbolic (or, at least, one of them) communion thanks to that idiom: therefore, a linguistic community could be gathered around a language as well as around a dialect or a sociolect,³ but as we are investigating the relations between languages and frontiers, our main interest will be focused on communities that are determined by idioms usually perceived as languages. In any case, if we accept the definition of a linguistic community based upon the notion of language, it seems that it is quite impossible to avoid providing a definition of language itself.

At this point a serious problem arises, which usually escapes the attention of the general public, but linguists are fully aware of it: this is the

3 Cf. Škiljan 1998, 123.

problem of linguistic identity, observed as the identity of a particular language (or, consequently, of any other idiom).⁴ Linguistics actually does not have at its disposal a satisfying definition of language, by means of which it would be possible to distinguish in an unambiguous way not only one language from its dialects but also two languages one from another, if they are genetically and typologically closely enough related. The emphasis here is on the fact that in many cases inherent boundaries between languages, or between some language and the idioms that are hierarchically subordinated to it, are not clearly drawn at the systemic and abstract level, which does not necessarily correspond to actual spatial or temporal contiguity of languages.

The lack of valid linguistic criteria for discerning languages as abstract systems is reflected in real situations by establishing “soft” boundaries between two languages in space or time.⁵ Linguistic borderlines really represent a series of particular occurrences, and each of them has its own particularities. Nevertheless, in a theoretical model they could be divided into two basic categories. The first comprises “hard” borderlines between two idioms which have a sufficient number of typologically distinctive features (originating most frequently from the fact that these two idioms do not have common genetic roots), so that their distinctiveness is obvious to every speaker and the members of their linguistic communities are (at least virtually) completely aware of that fact as well as of the impossibility of mutual understanding. On an abstract level that kind of “hard” linguistic frontier exists, for example, between Latin and Chinese; in real spatial relations it exists between Slovenian and Hungarian, for instance, and in the past such a borderline has been drawn, for example, between Latin and Gallic in the period of the Roman conquest of Gaul.

At the other end of the model are situated “soft” frontiers, in other words the frontiers set within a continuum, in which it is not clear where one linguistic system actually “ends” and the other “begins”: as a rule the idioms are genetically related and mutual comprehension is not excluded, while the consciousness that they are dissimilar is not self-evident and should be developed within the linguistic community by means of specific social

4 The issue is briefly presented in Bugarski 2001, 9 *sqq.*

5 The result is that the list of the languages of the world is partially based upon extralinguistic, i.e. mainly political criteria, which are in mutual relationship with another aspect of linguistic identity, namely with the speakers’ feeling of such an individual and collective identity; cf. Edwards 1985.

actions.⁶ The systemic example for such a case could be provided by the relationships among East Slavic languages. An often-quoted illustration of this kind of “soft” frontier in space represents the German-Dutch linguistic continuum, and among many examples of temporal continuum could be cited Old Church Slavic and Macedonian as its prolongation.

Consequently, the languages that are “hard” delimited in space have a “strong” linguistic identity (actual Hungarian provides a good example) and those with “soft” frontiers possess a more or less “weak” identity (Croatian or Serbian, for instance). On the other hand, a “soft” temporal borderline often makes possible to the linguistic community the formation of a continuous linguistic tradition,⁷ while “hard” frontiers sometimes cause the clear feeling of a “historical break”. In any case, linguistic communities which speak a language with “strong” identity are in principle deprived of problems concerning their own linguistic identity. On the contrary, such problems could more easily arise in communities speaking a language with “weak” identity.

The collective identity of a linguistic community and the individual linguistic identity of its members (especially on a symbolic but also on a communicative level), however, does not depend only upon the typological distinctiveness of their idiom: it is determined by many factors, among which, in modern times, the relation between language and soil is not the least.⁸ If languages, according to our hypothesis, are originally related to human groups, it could be interesting to try to explore when this secondary relationship between languages and soil was established and how idioms obtained evident borderlines. Linguistic communities, like other human groups, are - as we have seen - dynamic phenomena and do not have fixed frontiers, because their contacts with other linguistic communities usually result in numerous multilingual and polyglossic situations on collective and individual levels, so that it is really impossible to draw a territorial borderline which would separate two or more communities. Therefore, our attention captures this transitional moment, in which the symbolic connection between the linguistic community and its language has been transferred to the relationship between language and soil and in which

6 Two extreme points of the proposed model are roughly adequate to Kloss' distinction between *Abstand* and *Ausbau* processes in sociolinguistics and the theory of language policy; cf. Kloss 1967.

7 Fishman (1978, 41-42) calls this aspect of the linguistic behavior of the community: historicity.

8 Some aspects of the problem are presented in [kiljan 1998, *passim*: see also the bibliography there.

“hard” as well as “soft” systemic distinctive features among languages have been projected onto territories, providing languages with frontiers.

The mentioned transfer is even more interesting, because it can have different consequences for linguistic communities. Besides communities with languages that acquired their definite territory, there are communities and languages without “fixed soil” (Romany is the best-known example), but also languages, which almost do not have their communities possessing however the territory (Irish or Welsh, for example); finally, there are perhaps situations, in which a linguistic community and the territory of its language are separated, as was the case with Jews before their return to Israel. Thus, it seems that the moment of “assigning” the language to soil has a very important role, and the first question which we have to answer is obviously when and how languages obtained their territorial borderlines.

It could be presumed that languages were related to soil in the period of the transition from a nomadic to a sedentary way of life, in other words in the period when linguistic communities themselves began to settle in definite territories. However, there is no evidence that in prehistoric times any territory was assigned to any language (or vice versa) and all ancient sources related territories to their populations, regardless of the language that they spoke.⁹ According to another hypothesis, the symbolic connection between language and soil could have been realized at the same time as the constitution of the first states, because they not only had their own determined territories and frontiers but also “official” idioms used in public communication, especially for administrative purposes. Nevertheless, we have to note that the state frontiers in Antiquity as well as in the Middle Ages were much more indefinite phenomena than they are today¹⁰ and that the language of administration never obliged the population to constitute a territorial linguistic community: on the contrary, territories of great states always comprised several linguistic communities, where the languages were related to their speakers, wherever they were, and not to the soil.¹¹ Even at the beginning of Modern Times linguistic communities and their territories were not defined by state borderlines and the possibly most influent community, comprising the speakers of Latin, had no territory.

9 It does not mean, of course, that languages were never mentioned in ancient sources: only, they were described as the characteristics of population and not of its territory.

10 Even the famous Roman *limes* was a military institution rather than the mark of the state frontier.

11 The assertion is confirmed, e.g. by Herodotus, cf. [kiljan 2001].

Consequently, we have to place the moment of the establishment of the symbolic relationship between language and territory (including the drawing of linguistic borderlines) in the period of the constitution of modern nation-states and of the defining of national territories (sometimes even without the state), that is in the eighteenth century for Western Europe or the nineteenth century for the rest of European nations. Among many other arguments, which could support such an assertion;¹² we will quote only three that furnish evidence for the linguistic aspect of the issue.

The first argument is provided by the fact that some languages possess the territory but no longer have a relevant linguistic community, as well as by the existence of linguistic communities without territories. Languages without a linguistic community that actually occupies the assigned territory, such as Irish or Welsh or, to a certain extent, Breton, belong to the nations which actively participated in the processes of national constitution and which have taken over its language from the linguistic community as an important national symbol.¹³ As the language became the symbol of the nation, it symbolically acquired the national soil too, and that relationship continued to function regardless of the fact that - mainly for communicative and political reasons - the language was substituted by another language, at least in public communication. Welsh and Breton demonstrate that it is not necessary to realize the nation-state: the emphasis is on the participation in national movements in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. On the other hand, linguistic communities (and ethnic groups), which, like Romanies, did not partake, for different reasons, in those movements, even where they traditionally settled certain areas, did not relate their language to soil and remained "without" symbolic territory. As we will try to illustrate quoting the examples from the Balkan area, an "embarkation with delay" to the processes of national constitution cannot always result in obtaining linguistic soil, all territories being already distributed.

The second proof is closely related to the first. The nation-states claim sometimes that "their" languages have a right to the territories outside their borderlines, even if there are no more speakers of these languages, and deny such a right to the real existing linguistic communities within the state frontiers. The first case could be exemplified by the actual position of the German language in Slovenia or Croatia, where German linguistic

12 The relations between language and the constitution of modern nations are described in detail in Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983, or James 1996.

13 The processes of this taking over and reasons why language could be transformed into a particularly appropriate national symbol are described in [kiljan 1998, 211 sqq.

communities have not existed since World War II, but a territory is to be attributed to these non-existent linguistic minorities. On the contrary, the speakers of Serbian or Croatian (including all varieties of the idiom), who represent, for example, nearly 10% of the population of Slovenia, are an illustration of a linguistic community without territory. Both situations are usually legitimated by means of historical arguments.¹⁴ However, what counts is only one moment in history, exactly the moment of national constitution: the presence of a linguistic community in a certain territory just at that moment justifies all later pretensions, even if the community is now extinct.¹⁵ If the other historical arguments were valid, every nation could claim all territories where it has settled in the past and, for example, Transcarpathian soil could appertain to South Slavs and their languages!

Finally, an additional argument is provided by cartography: the earliest maps showing the distribution of languages originate from the middle of the eighteenth century and they came into wider use only in the nineteenth century,¹⁶ thus coinciding with the rise of nations in Europe and with the fact that languages became an important factor in the drawing of state borderlines.

It can be concluded that the symbolic transfer of language from linguistic community to territory happened together with the processes of the formation of nation-states and the constitution of national consciousness in Modern Times. Only those ethnic entities which actively participated in the processes of distribution of national territories (not necessarily conformed to state territories: a fact that even today makes the advocates of nationalist ideologies unhappy), could clearly delimit their own linguistic soil and fix linguistic frontiers.¹⁷ Consequently, the establishing of linguistic borderlines was obviously in the first place an ideologically motivated

14 The difference between these two cases is commonly described in legal terms, as well as in linguistics, as a difference between autochthonous and non-autochthonous minorities.

15 In former Yugoslavia, as well as in newly established states, only those ethnic groups that were mentioned in the last Austro-Hungarian census are acknowledged as autochthonous minorities: therefore, the Serbo-Croatian community in Slovenia remained without linguistic rights and territory. The close relationship between the denial of linguistic rights and the lack of symbolic linguistic territory should be an issue of particular analysis.

16 Cf. Wallis & Robinson 1987, 113-114, and Kretschmer 1995, 236.

17 The European model of nation-states and linguistic territorial distribution was later transferred more or less successfully to other continents, especially to Asia and Africa, American political and demographic situation being in a certain way different.

political act, which could not in principle neglect “hard” systemic frontiers between two languages (but was, in compensation, easily supported by already existing “strong” identity of the linguistic community); in contrast it could model “soft” systemic frontiers according to ideological and political purposes, trying to convert the appropriate “weak” linguistic identity into a “strong” one.¹⁸

The linguistic and political situation in the Balkans, including both the synchronic as well as the diachronic dimension, could illustrate almost all elements of these theoretical considerations concerning the relations between languages, territories and frontiers. Our attention will be focused particularly on the South Slavic segment of the Balkans, which arouses special interest because of recent changes in regional linguistic borderlines and appearance of new (or, maybe, re-appearance of old?) languages.¹⁹

From the standpoint of dialectology the area from Slovenia to Bulgaria, that is the space of South Slavic languages, gives a typical example of dialectal continuum, in which systemic distinctions characterizing singular idioms are not great enough to delineate explicit mutual frontiers between two idioms in contact. On the other hand, it is framed by clearly contrasted idioms, such as Italian, German, Hungarian, Romanian, Greek and Albanian, so that this external borderline belongs to “hard” systemic frontiers. However, migrations through the ages concerned not only the South Slavic population, producing “miscellaneous” and “overlapping” dialectal situations, but also speakers of non-South Slavic languages (originating from neighboring areas or other regions, such as the speakers of Turkish, Ukrainian, Slovak or Romany), whose linguistic communities shared the same territory with South Slavic communities. This is only a rough picture produced by epichorion²⁰ idioms and it does not correspond to linguistic reality, which was (and is, of course, still today) much more complex.

If we observe the situation in the eighteenth century, which preceded the formation of national consciousness and movements in the area, as the Balkans were divided politically between two empires, the

18 This is one of the most important tasks of language policy in such societies, cf. Škiljan 1988, 28 sqq.

19 Different aspects of the problem of linguistic borders in the area are treated exhaustively in Thomas 1999. Cf. also Thomas 1994, 1998, and - from another viewpoint - Sériot 1997, and especially Sériot 1996.

20 The term is borrowed from classical Greek philology, where it denotes vernaculars spoken by population and different from literary dialects.

Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman (with the additional presence of Venice on the Adriatic coast), and religiously among three Churches (Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic), as well as these epichorionic idioms, in use were also Latin, classical Arabic and local variations of Old Church Slavonic, such as languages of liturgies, then another form of Latin, as well as German, Italian, Hungarian and Turkish as languages of the state administrations, and finally idioms used in literary production, the major part of which was based upon autochthonous South Slavic dialects but had - like other idioms of literacy - supra-dialectal (or, at least, supra-vernacular) systemic features.²¹ Each idiom used to have its own linguistic community (singular individuals participating sometimes in several of them) and its own communicative efficiency and symbolic power. Although the communicative space of each idiom had its limits (for some languages, such as for Latin or Arabic, they were, indeed, very extended), their frontiers, as well as the borderlines of the symbolic spaces, were so crisscrossed that it was impossible to delineate them univocally. Moreover, all these idioms in the first place were related to their linguistic communities and not to territories. The belonging to the linguistic community and its symbolic space denoted primarily the social stratum to which speakers appertained: the fact is evident when it is a question of liturgical, administrative or literary idioms, but the assertion is valid too for vernaculars and epichorionic idioms that were usually related to small communities, situated permanently in a certain territory which was not perceived, however, as a kind of linguistic determination.

After the period which saw the rise of national movements in the first half of the nineteenth century, the situation completely changed in its second half, that is in the moment when nations and national consciousness were being constituted. The changes pertained to communicative and symbolic linguistic matrixes: liturgical languages lost a lot of their communicative efficiencies and symbolic power, epichorionic idioms in supra-dialectal and pre-standardized form were partially introduced into educational and administrative use and their symbolic and communicative spaces were enlarged. The most important change concerned the relationship between languages and territory, as the nations *in statu nascendi* took over languages from linguistic communities as their own symbols and "assigned" to these languages the territories that they claimed. On the margins of the area Slovenes and Bulgarians formed their proper symbolic instruments and drew new virtual linguistic (and "real" ethnic) borderlines. As Slovenia had already been divided administratively from Croatia under the

21 For some more details v. Škiljan 1996 (with bibliography).

Austro-Hungarian Empire and possessed, in part, a separate cultural tradition, its claims for territory have not posed many problems on the east boundary (unlike the north and west frontiers, where Germans and Italians, whose processes of nation constituting were more or less finished, had previously “taken” the region of Carinthia, respectively the district west from Isonzo). As political and administrative circumstances were different in the Ottoman Empire and as the Macedonian national movement was for the most part incorporated in the Bulgarian one, or at least ideologically closely related to it, Bulgarians could “appropriate” all Bulgaro-Macedonian territory as their linguistic (and ethnic) soil.

In the central area, in spite of the fact that there were two distinct national movements, based upon different cultural and religious traditions and belonging to different political entities, Serbian and Croatian, for reasons that are well known and therefore should not be discussed here, parallel to the formation of national consciences, a supra-national (even Pan-South-Slavic) political option was predominant, trying to realize a common South Slavic state. The “softness” of internal and the “hardness” of external linguistic frontiers were obviously favorable to the project, so that in the second half of the nineteenth century efforts were made to form one common (but not unified) symbolic and communicative space between Slovenian and Bulgarian territories (and from time to time even together with them), which resulted at the beginning of the twentieth century in the Serbo-Croatian linguistic standardization. Nevertheless, this unifying action did not completely cancel internal borderlines; on the contrary, as it was performed by two national movements which always had, as well as common goals, particular interests too, language was not conceived only as a supra-national but also as a national symbol, so that “soft” internal frontiers (that could be at any moment transformed into “hard” ones) remained and followed in principle presumed or real ethnic borderlines. It should be stressed that the whole territory between Slovenian and the Bulgaro-Macedonian complex was symbolically divided between two nations which only actually acted on the political stage at the time, in other words between Croats and Serbs.

Presence or absence of an adequately articulated national movement at the right moment had serious consequences for language policies in the twentieth century. In the first place the Macedonians had to face them: the promotion of their language as a national symbol was made more difficult by the fact that the territory had already been symbolically “appropriated” by Bulgarians, and it is only the constitution of the state within postwar Yugoslavia which made possible the separation of the Macedonian

linguistic territory and the fixing of its frontiers, in spite of continuous Bulgarian opposition.²² After the definitive decay of Yugoslavia, a similar problem arose in the domain of Serbo-Croatian, where Bosnian and Montenegrin are claiming their soils, as they - in a different way, indeed - pretend to become national symbols, but there is no "free" territory, because the whole area is already divided between Croatian and Serbian.²³ Croats, following nationalistic policy and ideology, on their part transformed existing "soft" internal frontiers to "hard" external borderlines towards the Serbian language, and Serbs, even those in Croatia,²⁴ accepted this ideological game without long hesitation. It seems that it is possible to conclude that the promotion of new languages and linguistic territories, in the areas with "soft" systemic frontiers, depends much more on ideological choices, political actions and relations among political and social powers than on real distinctive features inherent to linguistic systems.

The transposition of the symbolic value of language from linguistic community to soil, the constitution of nations, the drawing of territorial linguistic frontiers and their removing from abstract imaginary domains to real spaces of life, notably influenced the formation of collective and individual linguistic identities. The eighteenth century in the Balkans was - as we have seen - characterized by many different linguistic communities, each possessing its own linguistic identity, territorially overlapping and crisscrossed, arranged in a hierarchy that depends upon the symbolic value and communicative reach of every idiom and sometimes more or less conscious of their mutual relations. In the second half of the nineteenth century, on the contrary, linguistic communities were enlarged and nationally determined, so that collective identification comprised a clear consciousness about frontiers and Them, who were territorially separated from Us. As the example of Serbo-Croatian relations shows, these collective spaces can be changed under the pressure of ideological and political factors, regardless of systemic characteristics of idioms or their communicative reach.

22 The Greek opposition to Macedonia does not have this linguistic dimension.

23 The problem of soil can be illustrated by recent discussions in Croatia about the linguistic rights of the speakers of Italian in Istria: while bilingualism was restrained in several coastal cities which appertained to the Italian linguistic domain in the nineteenth century, it could be tolerated by the mainstream of Croatian politics, but as soon as it pretended to be expanded into the entire Istrian territory, including traditional Croat "soil", such a bilingualism became unacceptable.

24 We are primarily speaking, of course, about political elites, but also, under their impact, about the self-perception of ethnic and linguistic communities.

On the level of individual identities, we can easily imagine an illiterate, rural person from the eighteenth century, whose linguistic identity comprises only the belonging to the closest group of cohabitants, as well as an educated multilingual citizen, who fully participates in all linguistic communities and sees all languages that he masters as his own idioms. After the period of the rise of nations, all speakers should be basically identified with (and by means of) their “national” languages, even if their linguistic competence is not very different from the competence of those eighteenth century persons.²⁵ Of course, the reality of linguistic frontiers today is an undeniable phenomenon that determines considerably our individual and collective lives, but it is nevertheless difficult to overlook the fact that every linguistic borderline of that sort could be one more limitation of our human existence.

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**Mediating Identity: The Tangled Web
of Media (Re)production
of Cultural Identities**

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It has become a commonplace to observe that significant transformations have occurred in information media and communications in general in the last decades of the twentieth century mainly as a consequence of new technological forms of delivery. As we are seeing old boundaries transgressed, new symbolic boundaries are constituted. The spaces of transmission defined by satellite footprints and radio signals are providing crucial and permanent boundaries of our age. As the questions of identity are interlinked with patterns of communication, “the ‘memory banks’ of our times are in some part built out of the materials supplied by the television and film industries” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 90); as “Identity is a question of memory, and memories of home in particular” (ibid.: 91) the media play a powerful role in the construction of those memories. Also, historically, the media have played a central role in the imagination of national communities and in the creation of cultural identities (Anderson, 1983).

This is especially true for the role of the broadcasting media, and even if the “world is exploding with information, there is a role for Government-funded public broadcasting that will enrich and help to define and reflect the national identity” (Price, 1995: 4).

The whole study of mass communications is “based on the premise that the media have significant effects” (McQuail, 1994: 327), and all of us can probably think of an instance when the mass media have played a significant role in the formation of our opinions and behavior. However,

whether the media are really likely to be the only necessary and sufficient cause of effects - and the media contribution to the formation of cultural identity is very difficult to assess - in spite of that, "a belief in deep and long-term consequences from the media will not be easily extinguished" (ibid.: 328).

Anthony Giddens writes about the way identity is mediated through words and images by television, the dominant medium of our time:

In high modernity, the influence of distant happenings on proximate events, and even on the intimacies of the self, becomes more and more commonplace. The media, printed and electronic, obviously play a central role in this respect. Mediated experience, since the first experience of writing, has long influenced both self-identity and the basic organization of social relations... With the development of mass communications, the interpretation of self-development and social system... becomes even more pronounced. (Giddens, 1991: 4-5)

But it was Marshal McLuhan who wrote about the retribalizing effects of television, by which he implied that identities are constructed from systematic and widely shared messages of the mass media (McLuhan, 1964). Much later Joshua Meyrowitz (1985; 1989) writes about the all-pervasiveness of the electronic media and about "mediated experience", showing how older bases for identification are weakened and new identities are more possible through mediated experience and by overcoming the limits of space. Meyrowitz offers an analysis of the impact of electronic media on social behavior and is concerned for the way in which electronic media have undermined the traditional relationship between physical settings and social situations to the extent that we are "no longer 'in' places in quite the same way we once were or thought we were" (Meyrowitz, 1989: 33), while John Thompson (1995) expresses what is at stake when he writes about the changing "interaction mix" of modern life and the fashioning of self and experience in a technologically mediated cultural environment:

Living in a mediated world involves a continuous interweaving of different forms of experience. For most individuals, as they move along the time-space paths of their daily lives, lived experience continues to exert a powerful influence... we think of ourselves and our life trajectories primarily in relation to the others whom, and the events which, we encounter... in the practical context of our daily lives. However... while lived experience remains fundamental, it is increasingly supplemented by, and... displaced by, mediated experience, which assumes a greater and greater role in the process of self-formation. Individuals increasingly draw on mediated experience to inform and refashion the project of the self (Thompson, 1995: 233).

The media also “makes us all rather like anthropologists in our own living room in purveying the world of those ‘Others’ who are represented to us on the screen” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 133). As we are largely dependent on the media for these images of people, events and places, our knowledge of the “Other” is also dependent on this mediated experience. Thus, taking into consideration that the majority of the flow of information is Western in its origin, it is through “Western eyes” that we create our knowledge of the “other” and often see ourselves through those same “Western eyes”. This is important to note for the further discussion in the paper, which deals with the ways in which Western media have constructed stereotypes and archetypes of Southeastern Europe, especially the Balkans.

Cultural imperialism and globalism

Last year in this seminar series I argued that until recently debates around cultural imperialism in relation to cultural identity were central to the question of the role of the media in the formation of cultural identity. (Kolar-Panov, 2001: 75-84) I will not repeat those arguments here. However, it is important to remember that questions of the Americanization, coca-colaization and Mac-Donaldization of society and culture are still important to the scholarship around the formation of cultural identity.

If, as we have seen, the power of the media in general and its power in the creation of cultural identity is largely assumed, most of these assumptions are grounded in what James Carey (1977) referred to as a “transmission view of communications”. Within this model communication technologies are the active and determining forces, while culture and identity are passive and reactive. Identities are shaped and modified by these forces, by the impact of these technologies. The theories of cultural imperialism rely on this communication model, as also do the theories around the globalization of culture.

However, the growth of global media is still dominated by Anglo-American production and in terms of cultural representation the re-articulation of the global, national and local poses a crucial question which cannot be answered only within the theories of cultural and media imperialism. However, it is argued that global interconnections through new media technologies bring a desire for different lifestyles and the values based mainly on American values are imposed on societies world wide (Morley and Robins, 1995: 223).

One of the problems with the cultural and media imperialism thesis is that it is often pointed out that it relied on a simplistic “hypodermic needle” (McQuail, 1994: 230, 239) model of media effects which, even if discredited by scholars, are still alive and well in popular culture. This model assumed that media products have direct effects on the audience. However, recent studies show a more complex pattern of media influence (e.g. Fiske, 1987; Morley, 1992) and we should take into consideration that the audience - viewer - media consumer has a freedom to interpret the material transmitted in whatever way they choose, based on their experience, social status, gender, ethnicity, education, etc. But even if the audience has a choice in the interpretation of media texts and products, the choice of those same media products is still determined and limited by the products coming from the powerful media corporations.

Because of this, authors like Herbert Schiller (1992) see the transnational corporations replacing American domination in cultural markets, and he argues that if a world market economy “has evolved” from but retains the central characteristics of “the original American pattern” (1992: 39) and that the cultural imperialism paradigm “no longer describes the global cultural condition today it is more useful to view transnational corporations as a central force” (Schiller, 1992: 14-5).

It is very important to point out that while “globalization is profoundly transforming our apprehension of the world” by “provoking a new experience of orientation, new senses of placed and placeless identity” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 121) and while the continuity and historicity of identity are challenged by the immediacy and intensity of global cultural confrontations (ibid.: 122), on the other hand there is a search for what Richard Sennett calls a “purity and purified identity” (1971) and those “purified identities are constructed through the purification of space through the maintenance of territorial boundaries and frontiers” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 122). This desire for “purification” can, sadly, be exemplified by the wave of ethnic conflicts around the world, and for the sake of our discussion here, today, the conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

As “identity and difference are bound together it is impossible to reconstitute the relation to the second without confronting the experience of the first”, argues William Connolly (1989: 329). By establishing this relationship between identity and difference, strategies to protect identity through devaluation of the other are often employed.

We can take for example here the case of ex-Yugoslavia. While the creation of a communal identity of ex-Yugoslavia sought to eliminate

difference and complexity, it employed its centralized media in order to form a Yugoslav identity and Yugoslav culture which often involved the extrusion and marginalization of elements threatening to compromise this aim or to blur the sought clarity of Yugoslav national being, but as we will see later with the fall of Yugoslavia, another extreme was set in motion consisting of an anxious, self-enclosed way of belonging.

Southeastern Europe and the Balkans as the other

In any discussion of cultural identity we have to remember that “identity is as much about exclusion as it is about inclusion” and that “the critical factor for defining the ethnic group therefore becomes the social *boundary* which defines the group with respect to other groups... not the cultural reality within those boundaries” (Schlesinger, 1987: 235). The West has for long organized their collective fantasies around the idea of the Balkans as “the other” to the West, and especially to Europe, but “far from being the other of Europe, ex-Yugoslavia was rather Europe itself in its otherness, the screen onto which Europe projected its own repressed reverse” (I`ek, 1992).

When once again in the 1990s the Balkans became the visible European “other”, the assertion that the Balkans are not truly “European” was made over and over again. When the war broke out first in Croatia and later in Bosnia, the argument was that the Balkans could not possibly be European because of the brutality of the war that it was unthinkable could happen elsewhere in Europe at the end of the twentieth century. This perception has a direct bearing on the view of being “European or having European identity”.

The general tendency of the media reporting on the war in ex-Yugoslavia was to view the Balkans as a place of anachronistic nationalism and as a part of the region which itself is a peculiarly primitive place. All South Slavs were depicted as troublesome tribesmen. These perceptions of the Balkans frequently grew out of the archetypal representations of the region, which were first established in the nineteenth century and transmitted and transformed by successive generations of writers and producers. Stereotypes derived from popular literature of the nineteenth century remain unchallenged even today in many imaginings of the Balkans (Goldsworthy, 1998: 203).

Novels are rarely considered as media texts but their importance in learning stereotypes lies also in the fact that they are often transformed into

media texts of film and television. Furthermore they are sources of standard elements of narratives of identity, just like other forms of media representation.

In her excellent book *Inventing Ruritania*, Vesna Goldsworthy (1998) examines how the Balkans were constituted and accounts for the emergence of a "Balkan identity" in English literature in the nineteenth century. She argues how these images produced in the literature have been "endlessly transformed into film and television programs" and how they "have been disseminated to an unprecedented and unrivalled degree" (Goldsworthy, 1988: x). She points out that the most popular examples are Bram Stoker's *Transylvania* and Anthony Hope's *Ruritania*. In order to exemplify how these stereotypes still function today Goldsworthy quotes the recently-written *Balkan Ghosts: a Journey through History*, by Robert D. Kaplan (1993) which is very widely read: "This was a time capsule world: a dim stage, upon which people raged, spilled blood, experienced visions and ecstasies. Yet their expressions remained fixed and distant like dusty statuary" (1993: XXI).

This perception of the Balkans as "the place... at the bottom of the symbolic scale" of Otherness remains mainly unchallenged. Coming mostly from the body of novels, travelogues and other popular fiction it rarely gives way to writings of serious scholarship and research (Goldsworthy, 1998: 208).

Many volumes analyzed by Goldsworthy have been "dusted down and cited by journalists and newspaper columnists who, lacking the time for research" were "eager for a readable - and quotable - account of life and death in the Balkans" (ibid.: 203). In this way the nineteenth century ideas of the Balkans are kept alive and regularly invoked in assessment of the present day crisis. Let me take the more recent example of the Macedonian crisis in March 2001, which the world media showed by using the most extreme stereotypes based on the idea that the Balkans were a backward area where vicious tribes lived uneasily with one another, where romantic rebellion was common, conspiracy normal, civil wars cyclic and murdering one's neighbor nothing special. The cultural and political reality of the country was largely disregarded. The Balkans have been in the focus of the world media for the past ten years as the countries of former Yugoslavia lurch from crisis to crisis. In this ten years new myths have been created from the old ones but the stories about the Balkans are still full of descriptions like Lance Morrow's characterization of Serbs as: "bloodthirsty creatures of the dark" (Morrow, 1993). This is because when journalists

translate reality for the rest of us they use familiar facts and symbols. It is usual to link new news to old, often using historical stereotypes to make new comprehensible ones, and whether the links are events, symbols, individuals or story clusters, these so-called “news pegs” lead to a simplification of the story but give us an illusion of complexity. In this way the alien and exotic is made comprehensible as familiarity by using analogy, and guarantees an emotional response (Sadkovich, 1998: 84).

During the war in Croatia and Bosnia the world media resorted to this type of reporting, using the myths of fascist Croatia and the pro-allied Serbia in creating powerful stereotypes of Croats as pro-fascist butchers and Serbs as freedom fighters. The media at first reported the dangers of Croatian nationalism and depicted Croats as aggressive and genocidal, while the Serbs were seen as invincible guerrilla fighters, and the term *četnik* was rarely used; in contrast to this the term *ustaša* was frequently used to describe the Croats.

James Sadkovich (1998) gives an excellent analysis of the creation of stereotypes of Serbs, Croats and Muslims by the American media during the Yugoslav conflict and I have written about the same elsewhere (Kolar-Panov, 1997). If there are any questions we can follow them up in the discussion.

Re-building Croatian identity

As the media are actually more influential in times of crisis and war in its relation to the (re)creation of cultural identity, what I would like to do in the last part of this paper is to give a short account of the role the Croatian media played in the re(creation) of Croatian identity just prior to and during the war in Croatia.

Within the former Yugoslav state, broadcasting had presented a powerful unifying voice for a coherent Yugoslav identity. Thus the role of the media was crucial in the production and maintenance of a shared collective identity. This unity was reinforced through the form and content of the media and their relation to audiences. In the late 1980s changes in communication technologies and in particular the emergence of satellite and cable modes of transmission fragmented the audience and transformed the relationship between television and the nation. Because of this we have to address this re-articulation of the global, national and local in terms of the processes of globalization and localization which were reconstructing economic, political and cultural structures.

In terms of cultural representation these processes pose crucial questions to a small nation such as Croatia. Even more importantly, because the processes of globalization were coupled together with the period of fall of Yugoslavia and the consequent conflict and war, these parallel processes fostered intense political and cultural debate about nation and identity, especially after the formation of the new nation states from ex-Yugoslavia.

First of all, given the way in which the flow of international communications is Western in its origin, the images were based on Western stereotyping and, as I argued earlier, it was the Western media that represented the powerful images of the non-Western others thus providing us with the knowledge and a definition by which “we” distinguish ourselves from “them”. In addition the Serbian media continued their hate campaigns within their quest for a greater Serbia (Kolar-Panov, 1997:95-98). Thus in order to counter-effect all the relative images of Croatians as represented by the world media during and immediately before the war and as part of the (re)invention process (Kolar-Panov, 1997: 92-122), the Croatian national television HTV (*Hrvatska televizija*), which took over from TV Zagreb, increasingly produced programs glorifying the Croatian nation and its culture. This also included demonization of the enemy, and descriptions of the evil other and their bestiality and served the purpose “to purify our own culture and civilization” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 136). These forms of re-invention of Croatian cultural identity were also instrumental in the creation of Croatian nationalism and as such were often criticized by journalists and scholars alike, who conventionally disregarded the fact that all national televisions are engaged in this nation-making as a part of their mandate. Fears that neo-nationalism and its question of identity might eclipse those of citizenship, civic society and democracy were expressed with a concern that they would be replaced by an identity based on primordial loyalties, ethnicity, a “race” local community, language and other culturally concrete forms (Friedman, 1989: 61-2).

The search for a new cultural identity that would replace the state-provided and institutionally embedded identities based either on “proletarian” or other collective points of identification was happening at the same time as the disintegration and war in Yugoslavia, and I will here only give the example of Croatia even though all other former Yugoslav republics turned new nations went through similar processes of nation building and identity building. This was mainly achieved by a rediscovery of the past which was turned into a cultural present, or as Stuart Hall puts it:

Many of the nationalisms are busy trying, often on the basis of extremely dubious myths of origin and other spurious claims, to produce a purified 'folk' and to play the highly dangerous game of 'ethnic cleansing', to use the charming phrase which the Serbs have returned to the postmodern vocabulary. Here, real dislocated histories and hybridized ethnicities of Europe which have been made and remade across the tortured and violent history of Europe's march to modernity are subsumed by some essentialist conception of national identity, by the surreptitious return to tradition. Often of the 'invented' kind, as Hobsbawm and Ranger define it - which recasts cultural identity as an unfolding essence, moving apparently without change, from past to future (Hall, 1993: 356).

And HTV was actively involved in this "re-invention" (Hobsbawm, 1983) of Croatia and Croatian identity by producing programs that reflected historical, political and cultural questions of Croatian nationality and identity. However, all the media industries were involved in this re-creation of Croatian identity and the production of a community conscious of its shared history and traditions. A good example of this is the popular music industry which mass produced patriotic songs during the war but also produced music like that of Dražen Čanković glorifying the Croatian past (see: Kolar-Panov, 1997:143-44). These popular songs were often in the form of video spots which presented an integrative homogenizing force and a powerful catalyst for the formation of a Croatian cultural identity. The fifty years of denial of Croatian cultural identity or the celebration of that identity through folklore and other symbolic forms created a desire in Croatian people to rediscover their past and shared culture. While in Serbia under the Serbian nationalistic jingoistic slogan of "Keeping Yugoslavia as a nation" Serbian nationalism grew unobstructed, any expression of Croatian nationalistic feeling was quickly qualified by the world media as a revival of Nazism, and created a negative symbolic value for anything close to an expression of Croatian national consciousness. For example, the aria from Ivan Zajc's opera *Nikola Šubić-Zrinski*, "U boj, u boj" (To battle, to battle), which has often been used as a marker of Croatian identity, now took on other dimensions of meaning, presenting Croats as the defenders of the European borders from the Turkish invasion. What I would like to argue here is that this also shows a strong desire to escape from being the "Other" of Europe, showing a longing to fit into the civilized European family of nations.

Other forms of popular cultural productions pertaining to proving the historicity of the Croatian nation were widely publicized and made available to large audiences through television telecasts. One such event was a direct telecast of the re-installation of the monument to Ban Jelacic, removed by the Communist government from the main square in Zagreb

(Kolar-Panov, 1997: 114-119). The videotape of the celebration of the re-installation of the Ban Jelacic monument that includes the official HTV direct broadcast, also circulated among the diaspora, and I have described it elsewhere. What I would like to reinforce here is the way in which, through television broadcast such as this the media were used in re-building the Croatian identity, since this part of the celebration was also a very well staged summary of Croatian history in “Seven scenes” from the time of the first Croatian kings until Jelacic’s reign. Each of the scenes consisted of the recitation of poetry and a musical composition, mainly from the repertoire of the most famous Croatian poets describing the struggles for Croatian independence and statehood.

These “Seven scenes” were framed by the official speeches, including the speech of the Mayor of Zagreb and that of the late president Franjo Tudjman. Both speeches were glorifying the proud history of the Croatian fight for freedom and independence.

Television short series such as the *History of the Croatian People* were also available on videotapes (mainly for the diaspora) and publications like *Croatian Sacred Institutions* were produced. Together with popular cultural production of endless popular songs glorifying the Croatian past, these highbrow and glossy productions all presented what Immanuel Wallerstein calls “temporal dimensions of pastness” (1991). He argues:

Pastness is a mode by which persons are persuaded to act in the present in ways they might not otherwise act. Pastness is a central element in the socialisation of individuals, in the maintenance of group solidarity, in the establishment of or challenge of social legitimization. Pastness therefore is pre-eminently a moral phenomenon, therefore a political phenomenon, always a contemporary phenomenon (1991: 78).

This “pastness” was extremely important in the re-creation of Croatian cultural identity and the media played a crucial role in linking Croatian people to certain metaphors and stereotypes needed for cultural legitimization. It also allowed Croatian people to consolidate along national Croatian lines in opposition to Yugoslav unitarism that was re-enforced during former Yugoslavia. All this was happening with the Croatian march towards democracy and by the time of the Serbian aggression against Croatia the media was full of presentations of Serbs as the main enemy and a source of immediate danger to Croatia, which at that time was the truth.

Even though it is often argued that Croatian history was mainly separate from the turbulent history of the Balkans (see Kenan, 1993), the media in Croatia often re-articulated the recent mythology concerning the creation of

Yugoslavia, the Serbian abolition of the state, the re-introduction of the monarchy, and the massacres committed on Croatian people during the second world war.

All this helped the Croatian cultural identity to be created in opposition to the “Other”, the “Other” being the Serbs.

However, scholarly publications such as *Two Thousand Years of Writing in Croatia* (Katicic and Novak, 1989) offered an anchorage for national pride by introducing a positive point of identification in the proud history of the country.

If we think that this kind of cultural absolutism is restricted to newly formed nations, we think wrongly.

An emphasis on tradition and cultural heritage is a part of every nation's cultural industry and economy. However, the forces of globalization today are altering the role of heritage industries or as Morley and Robins argue, the “new global economy is pulling (its) cultural identity in quite contradictory directions: it involves at once the devaluation and the valorisation of tradition and heritage” (1995: 121).

Morley and Robins see the very category of identity as problematical and ask: “Is it at all possible in a global press to regain a coherent and integral sense of identity?” (ibid.: 122) and argue that the “continuity and historicity of identity are challenged by the immediacy and intensity of global confrontations” (ibid.).

Thus the cultural heritage industry could be seen as one of the responses to global forces and through its strategies centered around the conservation rather than the re-interpretation of identities it may turn into a resuscitated patriotism and jingoism as we saw for a short time happening in Croatia.

However, cultural heritage industries may take on the more progressive form of the cultivation of national, local and regional identities, and the media can play a crucial role in that process.

None the less, what we have seen so far is that the Croatian media promoted the formation of a national community based on homogeneity - ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural, territorial. By seeking to eliminate difference and complexity this representation of the formation of national culture and identity also involved the marginalization of all elements that would seem to compromise the clarity of national being.

Or as Zygmunt Bauman (1992: 678-9) argues, the “promotion of homogeneity had to be complemented by the effort to brand, segregate and evict the ‘aliens’. As such this kind of national identity is perpetually under conditions of a besieged fortress... Identity stands and falls by the security of its borders and borders are ineffective unless guarded” (ibid.).

And it was this kind of identitarian logic, with its anxious self-enclosed way of belonging, that was represented by the Croatian media before and during the war in Croatia.

Through this content promotion of nationalistic sentiments, the kind of identity thinking based on idealized wholeness was strongly embedded in the media presentation of culture and identity, not only in Croatia but also in other newly democratized states of the Balkans.

With the end of the war and with it the end of the immediate danger to Croatia, the Croatian media toned down the rhetoric of nationalism and only isolated cases such as the controversial television show “The Croatian Book of Remembrance” (*Hrvatski spomenar*) remained in production for some time, and were later taken off the air due to the public outcry. The cultural heritage industry continued to grow, however, under the constant pressure of globalism, localism and regionalism.

Concluding remarks

It is true that “historically the media have played a central part in the imagination of the national communities; it is probably the case that the creation of culture and identity in common would have been impossible without the contribution of print and subsequently broadcast media” (Morley and Robins, 1995: 196).

However, while the role of the media in mediating cultural identity is unquestionable, the media is by no means all-powerful in that respect. It is the nation state that has a central role in constructing, maintaining and reinforcing particular identities, and the national media only tend to reproduce ideologies of the nation state while national identity has traditionally been one of the main ideologies articulated by the state and national media to legitimate and mobilize consent (Scannel, 1989; Schlesinger, 1991). However, there is a strong argument that “in the face of global competition the articulation of national identity and its connection to language, the arts, to writing, film and television must be doubly nourished” (Price, 1995: 234). Thus Denis McQuail concludes:

The very large matter of social and cultural identity - who and what we are and how we are different from others - lies at the heart of many questions concerning meaning construction by the media. The media reflects and reinforces many conventional markers and boundary systems in relation to gender, class ethnicity, religion, nationality, subculture etc. Equally, the media do much to undermine boundaries maintained by circumstances or by other institutions. The messages of the media can also be mined for alternatives and for support of self-chosen definitions of identity (McQuail, 1994: 380).

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Immigrant Groups from Southeastern Europe in Trieste

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In the history of Trieste, ethnic and religious groups have always played a significant role. Owing to its important strategic position, in 1719 the Austrian Emperor Charles VI declared the city a *free port*. This fact had a notable influence on its economic, physical and demographic growth. Trieste became the biggest port of the Adriatic, with imperial functions. With the advantages brought by the imperial patents and the commercial benefits, it also became a crossroads for merchants, entrepreneurs, ship owners and contractors, adventurers... Jews, Greeks, Serbs, Croats, Montenegrins, Turks, and Armenians¹ arrived in the city where they joined the autochthonous population, to which also belonged the nucleus of Slovenes already established in the Carst and along Istria since the seventh century. The majority of the communities, also called “nations”, kept their own cultural and religious identities. In addition to the Italians and the Slovenes native to the area, the ethnic communities that still maintain a consistent economic and cultural vitality in the Giulian capital are Jews, Greeks, Serbs and Croats. Together with the Slovene population, these four groups represent historical communities whose renowned members have contributed to the growth and the splendor of the city, to its positive standing in the fields of the economy, the sciences and culture. Each and all of these communities has its own particular history. With reference to the populations who belong to the three main southern Slav peoples,

¹ Recently a book has been published about the presence of the ethnic communities which became historical in Trieste; see BENUSSI Cristina (ed.): *DentroTrieste. Voci e volti di ebrei, greci, sloveni, serbi, croati (Inside Trieste: voices of Jews, Greeks, Slovenians, Serbs, Croatians)*, Hammerle Editori in Trieste, Trieste, 2001.

Slovenians, Croats and Serbs, we can find testimonies to historical moments when their relations have been more intense, intertwined, mingled by the same destiny; and we can find periods when those interests have been separated, have taken divergent directions, mirroring in this way the separations imposed by the political events taking place in the fatherland. Together with the communities present for centuries in the city fabric who became an integral part of daily life, there are countless new presences, both ethnic and religious, which nowadays shape the face of Trieste and represent its multiple new soul.

The new presences have grown thanks to consistent immigration in the Friuli Venezia Giulia area, particularly in the cities of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine, border cities or cities close to the border area. This border is not an ordinary border between two European states. It is the Schengen border, the border that nowadays separates the European Union from the countries that are excluded from the integration process, or from those which are supposed to enter the big family of Western Europe in 2004 (amongst which is Slovenia). It is still the border between the two Europes. This border is vulnerable precisely at the gates of Trieste, “sieve city” between the two worlds, as some people call Trieste, a city which has seen a separation from its own hinterland with great suffering and which up till now holds separate memories. Trieste, border city, populated by “border people”, cultivates ambiguous feelings towards the newly arrived, and in this behavior it is not different from other national urban centers and from the European metropolises.

The alarming figures that are published daily in the newspapers about the migratory flux and the illegal migrations, feed the feeling of a sense of threat to their own national identity in one part of the population. In the other part, it nourishes the sense of fear of possible erosion of the quality of life. So far, the number of foreign citizens present in Italy is lower than in other European countries. This has happened despite the fact that Italy is, from the geographic point of view, the first Mediterranean country and therefore exposed as a spur towards the shores of the African continent, those of the Middle East and those of the Other Europe, towards the lands where conflicts are spreading and where violations of human rights belong to the daily order, where poverty, unemployment, persecution, and the lack of a vision of a better future, push the masses to abandon their native places, and the fact that Italy is still, for a good number of people, the first spur of hope. Whereas in Italy the average number of foreigners is 2.7%, in Switzerland it has reached 18% and is still rising! Nevertheless, the figures are not enough to defuse the sensation of an “invasion” by the stowaways.

The fear of the Other who is increasingly visibly in the streets and the squares of Italian towns and cities, is palpable and sometimes leads to xenophobia, intolerance and racism. The figures are, however, unavoidable in order to place the phenomenon in its national, European and world context and to make visible the quantitative and rational analysis of the people who deal with the phenomenon. In this context, we find indicative the words of the welfare advisor (*assessore comunale alla assistenza*) of Trieste, Gianni Pecol Cominotto: "Let us welcome the foreigners or we will disappear".² The phrase of the politician refers to the demographic data that show that Trieste in 1999 had for the first time in years a positive demographic balance. According to the Statistical Dossier, published by Caritas in Rome, there were 14,742 foreigners legally living in Trieste during the year 2000, of which 2,354 were "comunitari" (citizens of a European Union country) and 12,388 were "extra-comunitari" (overseas). To these figures it is necessary to add the foreigners living illegally, which might be four or even five times the number of those living legally. Therefore the official figures that show the numbers of foreigners might only be the tip of the iceberg of immigration. The countries from which the majority of immigrants come are those in the Balkans area: Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro - 3,115), Croatia (1,160), Albania (382), Slovenia (231), Bosnia and Herzegovina (143), Macedonia (14). The communities whose numerical weight follows are the Chinese (243), and Africans from Senegal (92) and Somalia (87).³

Another indicator of the multi-ethnic presence in the city is the number of foreign pupils in the schools. In the academic year 1999/2000, foreign students enrolled in the schools of the province of Trieste in total represented 4% of the whole school population. Also in this case the majority were students coming from the Balkans area, followed by the Chinese. If we analyze another section of society, the labor section and, particularly, the building sector, where the biggest number of non-European foreigners are registered, we will again find a massive proportion of the labor force arriving from Southeast Europe, mostly from Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo and Albania.

With reference to domestic help, a typically female occupation, the majority of the foreigners come from Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. Before

2 Silvio Maranzana, "Accogliamo gli stranieri o spariremo" (We should welcome the foreigners or we will disappear"), *Il Piccolo*, Trieste, November 22nd 2000.

3 Foreigners resident in Trieste, up to the December 31st 1999, according to citizenship and sex (data with reference to Europe), Statistical Service of the Municipality of Trieste.

describing the characteristics of the immigrant populations of Southeastern European origin, it is opportune to remember some of the elements which better describe the phenomenon of immigration in the whole Mediterranean area, an area where Italy holds the key position.

There are big significant differences and characteristics in the South of Europe with reference to the phenomenon of immigration in the same way that there are important *regional differences* within a country. The migratory mass present in national territories is also diversified from an ethnic and social point of view, as well as in respect of needs, desires, professions, gender and age.⁴ The big *internal differentiation* of the collective identity commonly called *immigrants* is also a characteristic of immigration in the South of Europe. In this area, the migratory masses are different from those, mainly homogeneous from the ethnic point of view, that filled the cities and the factories of Northern Europe at the beginning of the sixties.

The sociologist Enzo Mingione has established some economic parameters in order to demonstrate that the countries of South Europe have some common denominators. In the first place are the *special characteristics of Mediterranean capitalism* understood as a variation of European capitalism. These special characteristics would consist of:

- The Southern European countries are the last to achieve an advanced and prosperous economy
- The Southern European countries have not inherited the obsolete industrial and economic structures of the last century
- In the history of the development of the South of Europe, the traditional industrial revolution and the mass expansion of the characteristic industry of the post Ford era typical of capitalism in the rest of Europe, is almost absent
- *Modernization* is substantially related to a qualitative change performed by the society departing from a rural identity (agrarian production) and experiencing a fast urbanization process based on the tertiary sector (development of services)
- The guiding sectors of the economy of the countries of South Europe are agriculture, tourism, building, craftsmanship and specialized small industry, characteristic of the so-called "third Italy"

4 Richter-Malabotta Melita, "Verso i modelli di migrazione europea" ("Towards Models of European Migration"), Paper presented at the Seminar "Interculturalità: verso una nuova cultura" ("Interculturality: towards a new culture"), *Multietnica*, Trieste, 1-2 April, 2000.

- The economy of the South is based on a flexible labor force, often seasonal (cultivation of the fields, fishing, tourism, building), with short-term contracts.⁵

It is necessary to add to these traits the characteristics of the labor market specific to the South of Europe. The most apparent is the dualism: on the one hand the formal sector, mostly employing autochthonous labor force with relatively high wages, secure working conditions and with protection of the rights of the workers. On the other hand, there is a big black market, insecure, without any trade union protection, composed mostly of foreign migrants in jobs generally considered to be of a low social status.

*

Trieste nowadays, despite important distinctions imposed by the identity of the port and the neighborhood of the state border, mirrors the main characteristics of the typical immigration trends of the whole Mediterranean area. One of the specific traits that differentiate Trieste from the rest of the national territory is the bulk of the numbers of immigrants coming from the Southeast of Europe. The main causes that have driven thousands of fugitives to leave their native countries are the wars that have set the Balkans alight and that have marked in a tragic fashion the population, as well as and the terrible erosion of Albanian society.

With reference to the immigrants arriving from the area of former Yugoslavia, it is important to bear in mind that the border between Italy and Yugoslavia was a “hot” border that at the time of the “cold war” and of the “question of Trieste” acted as an “iron curtain”, as a line of separation between the two worlds. At times, during the sixties and the seventies, this border showed that it was the least resistant point of the two blocks. For at least two and a half decades it was on this border where the meeting and fusion between the capitalist West and a socialist country⁶ took place. The mass of Yugoslavs, who crossed the border at the gates of the city and daily went shopping in the city center called *borgo teresiano*, made them familiar to Trieste. In spite of the fact that they never penetrated its cultural sphere and that they were unfamiliar to its history and its soul, in some subtle way

5 See King Russel, “Towards a pattern of Immigration into Southern Europe” in Anderson M. and Bort E. (eds.) *Schengen & Southern Frontier of European Union*, The University of Edinburgh, 1998.

6 Richter-Malabotta Melita, “Overlapping Cultures” in Švob-Đokic Nada (ed.), *Redefining Cultural Identities: The Multicultural Contexts of the Central European and Mediterranean Regions* Institute for International Relations, Zagreb, 2001.

they took hold of its *life map*, of its civilizing spirit. To them the existence of Slav ethnic communities of ancient origin was well known, appreciated. However, no relationship of particular interest or intensity was born between those who were sporadically visiting the city and those who lived in it as normal Italian citizens. The General Consulate of Yugoslavia dealt with the bureaucratic or mere relationship needs with the authorities of the place. The Serb-Orthodox church of San Spiridione, reference point for the local Serb community, represented more a relevant cultural and architectonic monument, an element of “national” pride rather than a cult place exclusively linked to the Serb presence in Trieste. Religion in itself, after decades of official atheism, had stopped being a founding identity element for a Yugoslav citizen. The practising Catholics, Croats, Bosnians and others who had settled between the sixties and the nineties in the city, did not feel the pressing need to find a national identity through religious expression and very often they became assimilated into the fabric of the city without any kind of particular obstacle. It is only recently, when the church and religion have gained an important role in the awakening of national identity and in the creation of new state identities, that religion has also taken on a significant identity role amongst the population of new immigrants. Nowadays, the Croat component is seeking the development of the liturgy in the Croat language (periodically), whereas the Muslim Bosnian populations get together for Friday prayer with the immigrants coming from Islamic countries, mainly Africans. As there is no mosque, prayer takes place in private homes.

The history of the Slovenes in Trieste is completely different. They are autochthonous inhabitants of the place. For centuries they have had close contact with their Italian co-citizens. They have tenaciously fought against assimilation and for the preservation of their cultural identity, for the liturgical service in Slovenian and for the secularization of the Slovenian language. The signs of their presence in the city have systematically been denied. Nevertheless, every tiny village of the Carst transpires to the presence of the Slovene culture, through the architecture, the music, the language, the religiosity, tradition and gastronomy. For decades, all of them, the Slovenes who are Italian citizens and those who used to arrive from Slovenia, which at that time was one of the federated republics of Yugoslavia, the Croats, the Serbs, the Montenegrins, the Bosnians, the Macedonians... were commonly called “sciavi” or “slavi” depending on the degree of ideological, ethnic or cultural distance that the speaker wanted to put between himself and the “Balkan mass”. In any case, the frequent

contact between the populations and the ever growing economic relations between the two countries had an influence on the bettering of mutual knowledge and on a decay of the feeling of an imminent “eastern threat” or “communist threat”, widespread after the second world war. These relevant elements were determinants in the humanitarian answer and the unconditional reception of the war refugees at the moment of the start of the Yugoslav conflict and the war events.

The city of Trieste has not been the only one to face the weight of the sudden *refugee emergency*. All the Friuli Venezia Giulia region was affected, particularly the province of Udine with the municipal areas of Cervignano and Cividale, which became bases for reception centers. The new immigration from the Southeast of Europe continued following the wave of the emergency caused by the shift of the war centers (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo), by the “tellurian movements” that have shaken Albania, by the NATO shelling of Belgrade, by the exodus of refugees mostly from the urban areas, by a general shocking impoverishment of the population taking place in Serbia and in Macedonia, by the absence of a perspective of a better life... The new immigration caused the growth of the traditional national communities which were present in the city and brought with it anguish and unsettledness. The most important component of this immigration is the Serb, who has been received and helped by the local ethnic community. This community is still growing and is probably bigger than the official figures show. According to the number of temporary residence permits (*permessi di soggiorno*) issued by the police (*Questura*), there are 3,984 Serbs in the city, whereas according to the journalists who have written about the “Balkan Town” there may be about 14,000. Even though this estimation seems somewhat exaggerated there is an objective difficulty when trying to ascertain a stable number of this population because a good number of them are transitory or sporadic. They are commuters who alternate between stays in Italy and stays in Yugoslavia. The residence and work permits are only a weak indicator of the reality of the Serb presence (as is the case of all immigrants) who have among their ranks a lot of “non regolari” (illegal immigrants or/and workers). One of the squares of the city, Piazza Garibaldi, which became the usual meeting point of the Serb immigrants, has been popularly re-christened “piazza Miloshevich” or “piazza Po`arevac” (the name of the town of origin of the majority of the immigrants). The Serb workers, a mainly male labor force, looking daily for work, often in black, are received without hostility; they are even highly estimated for their seriousness and

for their working capacity and they are generally considered, like the Croat, Bosnian and Macedonian workers, a *desirable immigration*. There is need of their work mostly in the building and refurbishment sector and it is “exported” throughout the whole area of Friuli Venezia Giulia and Veneto, once well known for the qualified local labor force in the sector.

Differently to the first wave of fugitives from Bosnia (which peaked in 1995-96) whose perspectives of return to their country were uncertain and far away, the majority of the huge Serb immigrant population, as we already mentioned, live contemporarily in Trieste and in Yugoslavia, in their country of birth. This fact has as a consequence that integration into the host society is limited and partial. The main reason that these people ask for a temporary residence permit is the search for work. Even those who are sporadically present in the city, the actual commuters between two worlds, are in Trieste just for work. What they earn is only partially re-invested in their life abroad; the first objective is the improvement of the conditions of life in their native country where the rest of the family lives, where the house is built, where they plan to go back “one day”. Interest in participation in the life of the city is almost non-existent and all the informal social relationships remain within the national community, in the houses or in the open air in the already mentioned piazza Garibaldi, in the nearby bars, in the workers’ and craftsmen’s association “Vuk Karadžić”... The Serb Orthodox Church remains a pillar of the community, and it has not only the role of a reference point from the religious and spiritual point of view, but also as a cultural and social one.

One of the characteristics of immigration from Southeastern Europe to Trieste is that, in spite of its rich ethnic diversity, *it has not transmitted the ethnic conflict from the native country to the city*, or generally speaking, beyond the border. There has never been any clash; any fight, any argument between the components of the different ethnic groups in the city of Trieste. On the building sites and in the street excavations of the various Italian cities, workers from all the ethnic groups of former Yugoslavia work together. Likewise in the scientific institutions. In the city of Trieste, the close friendships of the people who used to consider themselves Yugoslav, have not disappeared; in the transitional associations such as “Multietnica” and “Interethnos”, together with the Italians work Chinese, Kurds, Argentinians, Iranians, Somalians, Senegalese, Bulgarians, Jamaicans, Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Albanians, Bosnians... In the compulsory schools, pupils coming from Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia,

Kosovo sit together on the same bench. Often, even after school time they take part in classes with the *linguistic mediators* coming both from the Croat linguistic field and from the Serb linguistic field. Never ever has a parent objected to this; on the contrary linguistic support for children and teenagers who experience difficulties learning Italian, is more and more sought after, both by the schools and by the parents.

We will consider the numbers of foreign students and pupils in the schools, particularly those coming from the area of former Yugoslavia, considering that precisely this segment of the population is the bridge between the immigrant family, the institution and the territory, between two cultures, the native and the host.

In the schools of Trieste, for every hundred students or pupils, there are at least four who come from other countries.⁷ In the majority of cases, they are children and teenagers coming from the Balkan area. The maximum peak of the so-called “continuous-rain” insertions of children coming from this area took place in 1995-1996 during the arrival of the mass of Bosnian fugitives.⁸ The school took care of the foreign students mostly because their limited knowledge of the Italian language meant a “problem”, an “obstacle” to the “normal” development of the school curriculum. With reference to the children coming from Bosnia and other war zones, the normal process of adjustment was slowed down by the highly emotive conditions accompanying the migration. The trauma suffered due to forced *uprooting* a lot of situations of family groups separated or destroyed, had repercussions on the psychological state of the child who, used to finding a welcoming climate at school where he felt potentially “alla pari” (equal) with the autochthonous children, when going “home” (and very often “home” meant the refugee center), went back to the real environment of uneasiness and marginality. The uncertainty experienced by the refugee was reflected in the difficulties that the child used to find in adjusting to school life. There were also children who managed to learn the new language and who adjusted without any problem to school life. They refused to speak their mother tongue even in their family life, trying in this

7 "Scuola multiethnica, da noi c'è" (*There is here a multiethnic school*), *Il Piccolo*, Trieste, April 14th, 2000.

8 See Parmeggiani, Alice, “Considerazioni sull’inserimento di alunni provenienti della ex Jugoslavia nelle scuole dell’obbligo della provincia di Udine” (“Considerations on the insertion of pupils coming from the former Yugoslavia in the compulsory schools in the Province of Udine”), in *Plurilinguismo*, number 5. 1998, University of Udine.

way unconsciously to cancel the reminders of a sense of belonging that for them meant recreating memories of suffering, uneasiness, loss and mourning.⁹ In these cases the new language was understood not only as a *need* but also as a *shelter* and *escape*. This “escape attempt” was not only present in the cases of children coming from war zones but also in the cases where the children are frequently reminded of the social disadvantage in which their immigrant/incoming family finds themselves.

There is another element that poses an obstacle to complete integration, not of the children but mostly of the adults coming from Southeastern Europe. This obstacle is *the geographic neighborhood of their countries*, of the new states that are more or less backing onto Trieste. This closeness nourishes continuous contact with the homeland, trips and emotional participation in the reality of the native society where the rest of the family and friends live. The consequence of this fact is that the people are in *continuous return* to their own cultural environment, the same one that they then try to transfer and keep abroad. Thus they *live contemporarily in two cultural environments* and more often than not, in two different social environments. The neighborhood also feeds the illusion of return, a postponed return and a return that is conditioned by the dreadful economic conditions and by the political uncertainties of the new nation-states. The children who follow their parents in their displacements, particularly during the summer holidays or during other festivities, going back to a Balkan rural environment still strongly impregnated by patriarchal practices, bring with them two different cultural codes, one often in opposition to the other. On the one hand, the sons and daughters participate in the return dream and the family migratory project; on the other, there are high expectations of the parents with reference to their children, who are seen as a mechanism for integration in the host country and its culture. This *duality of aspirations*, this ambiguity between the “here” and “there” and the tension that they generate, are more present among the immigrant population coming from the Balkans than among the people whose native

9 In the already mentioned study A. Parmeggiani states that “in the case of kids who are fugitive or who have suffered war trauma, there is another aspect. The new language and the new culture are understood as an alternative world where refuge can be sought, in opposition with the native tongue that on the contrary proposes once more a reminder of a past difficult to face. Also in this conflict, there have been verifiable cases of fugitive kids and teenagers who, from the moment of the first contact with the new school and the new circle of friends, have learnt Italian with unbelievable speed and insist on its use even with their parents and siblings, refusing sometimes to use their own language and are thus progressively losing competence”. A. Parmeggiani, *op. cit.* p 151.

countries are far away and difficult to reach, as for example in the case of the ethnic groups arriving from Central Africa, East and South Asia or Latin America.

While speaking about immigrant population and families we have implied the presence of women. A complete description of the situation of immigrant women would need more room and deeper study. Here, we will only make some remarks that we consider important because the *feminization* of the population of the immigrants is one of the basic characteristics of new European migration. Also involved here are the special characteristics of Trieste and of all the border area. The daily movement of the female labor force has been an actual fact and has been known for decades; it was also happening prior to male migration. At the time of Socialist Yugoslavia, the women from nearby Istria, both Slovene and Croat, used to cross the border en masse to do all the tasks of domestic service in the Italian households. It was a black labor market, tolerated because it covered a variety of unattractive jobs, jobs which were considered without prestige for the local population and that were not protected by the health services, retirement schemes, housing, etc, because after working hours the women went back to their places of residence. This form of work was important for the families of the female commuters because it added to their family budget and very often it was the most important source of earning of the whole family.

These movements of the female labor force have not decreased and they have spread to far away areas such as Veneto and Emilia-Romagna. They underwent a partial internal "specialization": the Slovene women from towns close to the border still work in domestic tasks whereas a good number of Croats have become specialized as nurses and as home carers for the old and ill. In this case, housing and food are displaced to the home of the patient and the exchange "between colleagues" takes place every fifteen days. To this population we have to add a good number of Serb women who arrived in Trieste together with the men during the intensification of the Yugoslav crisis, escaping from unemployment and war. They also found employment as domestic aides, nurses or in the cleaning co-operatives. Very often these jobs mean a *professional de-qualification*, typical of female immigration. There also follows the shift system with their co-nationals, even if the shifts are longer and they also commute between two countries. In any case a good number of them arrived with their male partners and their children, which means that the Serb migrant population in Trieste have a relatively "compact" family situation. However, as we have stated in different places, we are speaking about nuclear families, far from their extended families and strongly related to their own origins.

One characteristic of the immigrant women who work behind domestic walls and who come back home every day to continue doing their family tasks, taking care of the home, children and husband, is a somewhat *social invisibility* (this characteristic is the condition of most of the women of different ethnic origins living under the same circumstances; excluded are students and intellectuals). Their existence is known but they are not visible; it is as if their presence was virtual, submerged... Only recently, in the *associationism* amongst immigrants did their voice and their presence become visible. The role of the school is important in this process. The school asks them for their social engagement: it asks for participation and help not only from the pupils but also from the family in order for satisfactory school integration to take place. This collaboration is requested in the first place from the mothers. This is the way in which the school, through the child, becomes the factor putting the mothers of foreign pupils in contact with other mothers both of the same and of different ethnic groups and makes the women escape from their invisibility, helping them to widen their relationship networks and to enter into state institutions. The process of *reinforcement of the women's identity*, spread to different spheres, not only the working and scholastic ones, will represent in the future one of the key elements of adjustment of the *immigrant subject*.

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In this contribution, we have tried to underline some characteristics of recent immigration to Trieste, limiting our concern to the migration coming from the former Yugoslav area that together with the Albanian and Chinese represents the biggest entity in the city. We have mentioned the *internal diversification* of immigrant population *on an ethnic basis* and the birth of *new identity codes* such as for instance the religious one, deriving from the disintegration of former Yugoslavia. We have remembered that there is an almost total *absence of conflict* among the different ethnic groups present in the city in spite of the arrival of a good number of fugitives from the war zones. We have also seen through the magnifying lens the *importance of the intense historical relationships between Italy and Socialist Yugoslavia* and have pointed out the particular position that Trieste had in those relationships. All these elements had an enormous influence in the choice that the fugitives from the Balkans made to seek shelter in this city. We have mentioned the importance of the *school* environment in the integration process and the role of the *child of school age as a bridge between the reality of the immigrant people and the reality of the host country*. We have also indicated the *role of the child in the migratory project*. The proximity to the

native country, the continuous movement from one social and cultural setting to another, create, in our opinion, the *feeling of displacement*, widespread amongst the commuting migrants, the ambivalence towards the “here” and “there”. This ambivalence generates contradictory expectations from parents and children. We have also singled out the *feminization* and the *women’s social invisibility* as characteristic of the recent immigrant population. This phenomenon has been present for a long time in the transfrontier labor force. Notwithstanding the above mentioned specificity of the migration coming from Southeastern Europe, there are some conditions imposed by the host society to *all foreigners* to let them actually and symbolically “enter into the city”. According to the sociologist Adel Jabbar, the stages of integration of the foreigner into the host society are as follows:

1. *stabilization or territorialization*: represents the first contact with the host society and the search for the necessary means for survival;
2. *urbanization* or stage of exploration of the territory and the first institutional contacts. It is the stage of the formation of “mental maps” which will help the newly arrived in the networks of services and opportunities;
3. *nativization* or the process of *social naturalization* derivable from the stay in the territory and from the perception of the symbolic tie between the foreigner and the native citizen;
4. *citizenship, de facto*, or the true entrance into the city through the daily interrelations, which makes them become an effective member of the society.¹⁰

The recent immigration from Southeastern Europe (and not only from there, and not only in Northeastern Italy) is still far from having arrived at its last stages of the road; a road that in spite of certain common characteristics in the process of integration remains always an individual one. For a good number of migrants it means a second process of *acquisition of citizenship, a new birth*. It is possible only in a *favourable global context* and with an *internal re-structuring* of the host society, a society willing to change, in its own way, as the new candidate citizens must themselves.

10 Jabbar Adel, “Ali dagli occhi azzurri non sa che deve nascere di nuovo” (“Ali with blue eyes does not know that he has to be born again”), in *Dialogica*, number 10, Trento, December, 1999.

Cultural Imports and Cultural Identities: Hungarian Experiences

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There are many things that can be said about Hungary today, but I will focus my lecture today on just a few - in my mind - remarkable features that characterize Hungary and Hungarians. These may be glossed together under the heading: "cultural imports" and will include the culture of capitalism, the new culture of crime, and the state of youth and extremist youth culture. All these topics will lead me to close my presentation with a brief discussion about their relationship to the controversial concept of civil society.

Along with the unfavorable, downward trend in population, the transformation of politics, industry, agriculture and white-collar employment were the major catalysts determining the new economic profile of Hungary of the 1990s.¹ Despite many difficulties, the Hungarian economy experienced two years of growth, in 1994 and 1997, when the GDP increased by 3% and 3.8% respectively. This growth continued throughout 1998 and escalated during 1999 to 2000. While Hungary's foreign debts increased from \$20 billion in 1987 to \$24.5 billion in 1993, and at the beginning of 2000 remained steady at about \$23 billion, and while the social security budget went further into debt, Hungarians have continued to have their faith in their currency and banking system. Savings deposits increased threefold from 500 million forints in 1989 to 1.2 billion forints in 1993, and

1 Two recent English language books in particular deal with the economic transformation of Hungary in the 1990s: László Halpern and Charles Wyplosz (eds.), *Hungary: Towards a Market Economy* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998), and David Stark and László Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways: Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998).

then jumped to the hundreds of billions by the beginning of 2000.² However, this is only part of the larger picture. When we realize that, after the 1996 changes in the law, Hungarians were able to invest in the West, buy properties outside of Hungary, and have savings in western banks, it becomes obvious that Hungary's new upper classes enjoy a degree of wealth similar to that of many western Europeans.

One of the prime movers behind Hungary's new capitalistic cultural transformation was the creation of East-West joint venture companies. Although the socialist government introduced the legal framework for the development of East-West joint ventures in 1972, it was only in 1988, with Act IX on Economic Associations that western companies could fully participate in Hungary's economy.³ While in 1989 alone over 1,800 joint ventures were registered, by 1993 the figures stood at 19,000. With the close of the 1990s there are now around 30,000 such ventures. Most of the companies with foreign interests are located in Budapest and its environs (with 14,560 firms), 6,713 more are in the western part of the country, while the eastern part of the country has 4,857 joint venture companies.⁴ It is revealing in this matter how foreign investment contributed to Hungary's economic restructuring. The following simple calculations (given in millions USD) reveal the steady contribution of foreign investors to Hungarian development between 1991 and 1997:

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
1,614	1,911	2,481	1,320	4,570	2,040	2,107

2 See figures in Molnár, *Hungary*, p. 131. According to the figures released by the Hungarian National Bank, only the cash and savings deposits were well over 2,000 billion forints and the hard-currency accounts reached 560 billion forints in 1998; see *Népszabadság*, August 24, 1998, p. 12. The debt of the social security benefit (*társadalombiztosítás*) was inherited from the socialist era: in 1990 it was 23 billion forints, a figure which increased tenfold to 230 billion by 1997; see *Magyar Nemzet* August 27, 1998, p. 2.

3 Just what took place may be convincingly analyzed by viewing the data discussed in 1991 by western firms in KPMG et al. (eds.), *Doing Business in Hungary: CBI Initiative Eastern Europe* (Kogan Page, London, 1991).

4 Regional distribution of firms is best described in A. Kereszty (ed.), *Tények könyve: Régiók* (Book of Facts: Regions) (Greger-Belacroix, Budapest, 1998), p. 304; see also "Átlépték a Dunát a külföldi befektetők", *Népszabadság*, January 12, 1999, p. 13.

Thus, between 1990 and 1997, the total foreign investment in Hungary is estimated at almost \$17 billion, just slightly less than that invested in the Austrian economy. It is also necessary to mention that the European Union invested in Hungary, through its PHARE program, 1 billion ECU, or almost 100 million ECU every year in the 1990s.

Together with these investments, the founding of the State Privatization and Property Agency (Állami Privatizációs és Vagyongynökség), instrumental in overseeing privatization of Hungarian state firms, and the creation of the Budapest Stock Exchange were the most important actions, putting the Hungarian economy on the track toward a "free market" regime. In 1990, the State Property Agency controlled 1,859 state enterprises: by 1998 this number had shrunk to less than 500, a number still decreasing as more companies undergo privatization.

Aside from privatizing former state companies, one of the most important steps in disassembling the monolithic state economy came in 1987 to 1988 when the state banking business was split into independent commercial banks (such as the Magyar Hitel Bank, Kereskedelmi Bank, and Postabank). This introduced Hungary to capital and financial services of the western kind. Today more than 300 financial institutions including 42 bank chains, serve Hungarian and foreign customers; within Hungary proper, the Hungarian State National Bank for Savings (OTP), however, continues to be one of the largest and strongest of them all.⁵ Just how far the former state banking system has undergone privatization is suggested by the fact that only about one-fifth of bank shares are now owned by the state, 60% are in foreign hands, and the rest are owned by private individuals in Hungary.⁶

Hungary's agricultural transformation - especially animal breeding - fared much worse than its industrial or banking sectors. One indicator of the difficulties of agricultural transformation is the large number of agrarian demonstrations in 1997, a year that saw eighteen farmers' protest movements in 840 locations nationwide.⁷ What took place in Hungary in the 1990s to warrant such turmoil? The major transformation affecting Hungarian agriculture had four components: the disassembling of state

5 Data published by *Heti Világgazdaság*, August 15, 1998, p. 54.

6 It is worth mentioning here that most of the bank offices, 342, are located in Budapest (after Budapest Miskolc is number two with only about 37 bank offices).

7 Agrarian demonstrations are analyzed by M. Szabó, "Agrártiltakozások 1997", in S. Kurtán, P. Sándor, and L. Vass (eds.), *Magyarország politikai évkönyve 1997-ről* (Political yearbook of Hungary for 1997), DKMKA, Budapest, 1998, p. 205.

farms, land restitution, privatization of farming, and the rearrangements of agricultural trade.⁸ In 1988, only 93,000 hectares of agricultural land were in private hands; by 1994, when land restitution and privatization were completed pursuant to the 1992 law on privatization, over 5 million hectares had been transferred to private owners with only twenty-six large state farms of "strategic importance" (stock breeding, viniculture, etc.) remaining in state hands.⁹ At the same time, the number of agricultural businesses grew to an astronomical 32,000. Nobody doubts that that figure will decrease by the beginning of the third millennium as European demands will favor only a select few, especially those with high-quality goods for EU consumption.¹⁰ With such a major transfer of agricultural land, new ownership and production methods have been put into the works sending shock waves throughout Hungarian society. Suddenly, more than 2 million Hungarians became landowners, but not agricultural producers. More than 50% were retired and female!¹¹ This strange result, moreover, added to the havoc created by the continual devaluation of the Hungarian currency throughout the first half of the 1990s. Along with a lack of know-how and updated equipment, land being parceled out in small, discontinuous family plots, and, especially problematical, the loss of former COMECON markets, disarray in the agricultural sector was sure to ensue.

Signs of progress and the oft-uttered "economic miracle" - the antithesis of the former "goulash communist" self - are visible in other areas as well, a turn-about facilitated no doubt by the almost 100 million ECU provided by

8 The local responses to the early 1990s transformation of Hungarian agriculture are analyzed by I. Vasary, "Labyrinths of freedom: An agricultural community in post-socialist Hungary", in D. A. Kideckel (ed.), *East European communities: The struggle for balance in turbulent times* (Westview, Boulder, 1995), pp. 9-24; Chris Hann, "Land tenure and citizenship in Tázlár", in R. Abrahams (ed.), *After socialism: Land reform and social change in East Europe* (Berghahn Books, Oxford, 1996), pp. 23-50; and K. Kovács, "The transition in Hungarian agriculture 1990-1993. General tendencies, background factors and the case of the 'golden age'", in Abrahams, *ibid.*, pp. 51-84.

9 One such a window case has been the Bábolna agricultural state farm. It turned out, however, that by 1998 it had accumulated millions of dollars of debt that resulted in the dismissal of its chief executive; see "Balsiker Bábolnán" (Misfortune in Bábolna), *Magyar Nemzet*, August 15, 1998, p. 13; and its recent "recovery" in "Bábolna: Magyar hagyomány és európai környezet" (Hungarian tradition and European environment in Bábolna), *Magyar Nemzet*, June 14, 2000, p. 11-14.

10 Kereszty, *ibid.*, p. 307.

11 Kovács has analyzed this in detail, *ibid.*, p. 67. But femininization of agriculture was one of the "achievements" of state socialism throughout the Soviet bloc.

the European Union's PHARE program since 1990.¹² With the almost total collapse of heavy industry (steel and mining have been almost completely eliminated), and the rise of new economic players in high-tech, food and service industries, tourism is perhaps one of the most visible signs of globalized industry being cemented in a national setting. Tourism - especially the growing village tourism (falusi turizmus), sports tourism, the special profile health spas, wine and culinary events, hunting and national cultural week's programs - provides about 300,000 jobs throughout Hungary. This industry alone achieved an income of 2.9 billion dollars in 1997 and 3.4 billion dollars in 1999, sums that add up to an average of 9% of the GDP.¹³ In 1988, when Hungary's rulers still distinguished between western tourists and those coming from socialist countries - in other words, those who were counted as "ruble" tourists and those who were "hard currency tourists" - approximately 14 million people visited Hungary; ten years later this number jumped to an amazing 17 million, or about half of what Great Britain receives every year!¹⁴ With this growth, and the old socialist and foreign currency labels gone forever, Hungary truly became an integral part of the global tourist trade. There are, however, ample signs that the "numbers-before-quality" thinking has had its detrimental side-effects. Especially since the mid-1990s, a growing number of tourists have been complaining not only of petty crimes but, more importantly, of unfriendly treatment, over-charging, and second-class accommodation at the hands of

12 Between 1990 and 1996, Hungary received 683 million ECU for various infrastructural projects. For 1997-1999, an additional 325 million ECU came to Hungary, that gives an average of a 100 million ECU for every year during the 1990s. However, the new minister of the PHARE program, I. Boros, announced in 1998 that many programs had been mismanaged with limited funds allocated for the projects initially targeted for PHARE developments; see *Magyar Nemzet*, August 27, 1998, pp. 1-2.

13 These data are provided by the official Magyar Turizmus Rt., "A turizmus helyzete a világban és Magyarországon" (The state of tourism in the world and in Hungary), *Turista Magazin* 109, 1998, 7. Independent tourist agencies around Lake Balaton, Hungary's fashionable resort area, also purported that during the Summer of 1998 business increased 15-20% percent compared to 1997; see "Csúcsforgalom a Balatonnál" (High season at Lake Balaton), *Népszabadság*, August 5, 1998, p. 5.

14 See the figures released in "A turizmus helyzete," *ibid*, p. 7. For the earlier figures see, *Magyar Statisztikai Zsebkönyv*, (Budapest: KSH, 1989), p. 197; and *Népszabadság*, September 2, 2000, p. 12. Perhaps it was the sign of the slow opening of the communist system that while in 1960 only half a million foreigners (out of which only 72,309 from the capitalist west!) were allowed to enter Hungary, in 1974 already 8.2 million received entrance visas, including 1.1 million westerners.

unscrupulous tourist agents, restaurant and motel owners.¹⁵ Hungary's newly emerging entrepreneurs see that there is profit in tourism - most of which cannot be accurately checked by the State Tax and Financial Office (APEH) - and, aside from a small group of honest and caring hoteliers, cheap goods, unsanitary conditions and superficial services are the rule rather than the exception.¹⁶

There are other detrimental consequences of the booming tourist trade as well. Every year thousands of west European hunters flock to Hungary killing an unbelievably high number of game animals (deer, rabbit, wild boar, pheasant, etc.), a sport largely non-existent in the West due to successful animal rights campaigns. Another concern is the invention of mediocre tourist folklore and peasant-style make-believe atmosphere with cheap imitations of Hungary's peasant traditions - often in the form of colorful "goulash-parties," "puszta-shows," or "folk art fests" - with which tourist agencies cater to mass tastes without regard to regional flavors, authentic local traditions or scholarly findings that run counter to such inventions.¹⁷ It is clear that such an important source of income as tourism will have to be re-evaluated in line with global trends and ideas in the third millennium. As it does so, the country will have to find its truly genuine profile and identity best suited to catering to visitors both far from and near to home.

15 In 1996 and 1997, several downtown restaurants and bars in Budapest had to be closed down because of complaints by tourists; these included overpricing, aggressive behavior, and/or prostitution. The American Embassy in Budapest, for instance, releases a list of places that should be avoided by American tourists for such practices, a pattern followed by many other foreign diplomatic offices.

16 According to the 1998 summer investigations of the National Health and Municipal Medical Office (Állami Népegészségügyi és Tisztiorvosi Szolgálat, or ÁNTSZ) and the National Consumer Office (Fogyasztóvédelmi Főfelügyelőség) one out of every four tourist, commercial and transportation businesses was fined for health code violations or unfair business practices; see the reports in "Balatoni bírságok" (Fines around Balaton), *Népszabadság*, August 17, 1998, p. 5, and "Főszezon, örökzöld trükkök" (High season, the same tricks), *Népszabadság*, August 24, 1998, pp. 1-5.

17 In an English-language illustrated guide-book for children, regional peasant costumes show the kind of confusion and misinformation I talk about: a Transylvanian couple has been included in the Gy. P. Simon (ed.), *Hungary: A fun guide for children* (Budapest: Forma-Art, nd), n.p.

Poverty, unemployment, and crime: the re-arrangement of social relations

With all these signs of democratic developments, there are sad testimonies to the contradictory nature of fledgling capitalism of the Hungarian kind. With the disbanding of the socialist COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) economy and trade organization - that bought almost 60% of Hungary's industrial output before 1990 - Hungary's economic relations with former socialist countries dropped to below 18%, an economic output that may be increased by re-assessing the role of such trading organizations as the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA), or the Visegrád Group.¹⁸ As a natural consequence, certain industries were eliminated and industrial jobs were drastically reduced. While in 1988 there were more than 4.8 million employed in Hungary, this number dropped to 3.6 million ten years later.¹⁹ With such a large-scale decrease, there has been an important restructuring in the occupational hierarchy. The number of self-employed artisans, merchants, and clerical workers has increased manifold. On the top of the new social hierarchy are the new economic and political elites together with the successful private entrepreneurs, managers and members of the cultural elite.

With the GDP dropping about 20% from 1989 to 1992, and the budget deficit increasing from 3.3% in 1989 to 7% in 1992, industrial enterprises and most of the agricultural state farms were eliminated. This produced widespread unemployment and an increasing inequality. These are the most serious social problems of the turn of the millennium. With the elimination of 1.2 million jobs between 1990 and 1994, Hungary had more than 700,000 unemployed, or 14% of the workforce, a sum never before seen in Hungary's post-World War II history.²⁰

18 Hungary's economic relations with Russia, for instance, dropped to a meager 6-7% by 1998; in contrast, almost 60% of trade activity is with EU countries, a pattern which no doubt will continue in the first decade of the third millennium.

19 See *Népszabadság*, August 28, 1998, p. 11.

20 See the analyses by Gy. Nagy, "Munkanélküliség" (Unemployment), *Magyar Háztartási Panel*, 1994, pp. 16-26; and Gy. Nagy and E. Sik, "Munkanélküliség", *Magyar Háztartási Panel*, 1996, pp. 24-32.

However, because of the upward turn in production and trade, and the creation of jobs since the mid-1990s, registered unemployment decreased to 329,000 or to 8.3% of the workforce by mid-1998 (below that of the eastern part of Germany which still has over 10% unemployment)²¹ Recent improvements in employment notwithstanding, the emergence of both a new underclass and a new entrepreneurial class, or new moguls as Nigel Swain has suggested, has been the rule rather than the exception in the 1990s.²²

Unemployment has contributed, to a large extent, to the rearrangement of social relations and the creation of an unemployed class.²³ But poverty resulting from the loss of jobs has only been one facet of the introduction of capitalism throughout the former Soviet bloc. In Hungary, as in neighboring states, a related aspect has been the increase in income differentials: both blue and low-level white-collar employees' salaries decreased dramatically in the first years of the 1990s. With a small strata of the managerial and entrepreneurial group receiving the benefits of venture capitalism, Hungarian society has been undergoing massive and apparent polarization. The emergence of new millionaires, together with unemployment, income differentiation, the continuing inflation and devaluation of the Hungarian currency, has contributed considerably to dividing the Hungarian populations and regions into the haves and the have-nots.²⁴ For example, in 1994 the Central Statistical Office (abbreviated as KSH in Hungarian) estimated that about one million persons were living below the

21 Unemployment figure released by the Central Statistical Office for the first seven months of 1998; *Népszabadság*, August 28, 1998, p. 11. Yet, as some scholars argue, there is a considerably larger figure for unemployment if we take into account other forms including hidden unemployment, forced or early retirements, maternity leave, longer schooling for young people, etc.

22 Swain, *ibid.*, p. 230.

23 Registered unemployment figures released in the early 1990s are rather conservative. See for example the figures of the Economic Survey in Europe in L. Szamuely, "The social costs of transformation in Central and Eastern Europe", *The Hungarian Quarterly* vol. 37, no. 144, 1996, p. 57.

24 Hungary's new millionaires now may be best described as eccentric conspicuous consumers. They drive the latest models of western cars (mostly Mercedes 600, BMW, designer Jeep, or Ferrari), wear the most expensive designer clothes, own beach-front vacation homes on the Mediterranean shores with a yacht, own race horses, and belong to one of the private country clubs in Hungary. In fact, one such club, the Birdland Golf and Country Club, in the town of Bük, was ranked among the top twenty in Europe. Its owner-president, János Palotás, however, was investigated for embezzlement but acquitted later. However, through his investments and loans, Palotás may also have contributed to the disastrous failure of the Postabank.

poverty-level, an arbitrary sociological category based on the 13,000 forints per month or roughly \$60 income.²⁵

Just who are these people? Like elsewhere in the world, youth, women, and the elderly are especially adversely affected by the new conditions in the job market as education and retraining programs can not cope with the swift and special demands of the labor market. These social groups, therefore, must rely on meager social services of state or local governments. In this regard, while the socialist state proudly boasted its figures of zero unemployment and poverty, its democratic counterpart of the 1990s could not do the same. Already in 1992, 49% of those under 20 and 23% of those over 80 made up the group living below the poverty level. In addition, 60% of those living below the poverty line were housewives who had no pensions or salaries.²⁶

Age, gender and poverty are three constituents of the growing social schism plaguing Hungarian society. Even though the unemployment rate for women is somewhat lower (7.2%) than men's (8.3%), women continue to feel the negative side-effects of free-for-all capitalism. Even with the youthful energy of the FIDESZ government, there is only one woman in the government and the number of women's MPs declined from 42 in 1994 to 32 in 1998! Thus, the marginalisation of women in political life will continue until a strong women's movement emerges that counters such biases in the polity.²⁷

Besides age and gender components, unemployment and poverty also reveal an interesting geographical division. Hungary's eastern and northern areas, for instance, have been especially hard hit as critical heavy industrial plants closed down or underwent reorganization or privatization resulting in the firing of the majority of blue-collar laborers. By 1994, the counties of Nógrád, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg reached almost 20% of unemployment compared to the single-digit unemployment

²⁵ The state of poverty has been analyzed by R. Andorka and Zs. Spéder, "Szegénység" (Poverty), *Magyar Háztartási Panel* 1994, pp. 27-40; and "Szegénység", *Magyar Háztartási Panel*, 1996, pp. 33-48.

²⁶ See, Molnár, *Hungary*, p. 141.

²⁷ Just how obvious are the gender gap and male control of the economy in contemporary Hungary is easily observed in the sensationalized media case of Ildikó Czigány, the first female commercial pilot flying the Budapest-Cologne MALÉV flight on September 28, 1998. See the interview with her in "Ildikó, a másodpilóta" (Ildikó, the Second Pilot), *Magyar Nemzet*, October 3, 1998, p. 23.

of the western counties of Győr, Vas, and Zala, a positive pattern only surpassed by that of Budapest alone. This condition, together with the enormous investment into the western counties by foreign companies - major car manufacturers (Ford, Suzuki, Volkswagen), high-tech firms (Nokia, Hewlett Packard, Philips, IBM, Siemens), chemical- and food-producing plants (Stollwerck, Linde, Pharmavit) are located in the west - certainly will contribute to the making of two industrially separate halves of Hungary in the next millennium. This aspect of the 1990s has prompted the sociologist Júlia Szalai to declare that the impoverishment of large masses of citizens may be "one of the most fundamental political dangers threatening a democracy that has barely institutionalized."²⁸ Despite such negative forecasting, there are some positive signs on the horizon that new policies are forthcoming to combat this situation. However, poverty, unemployment and marginalization of social groups will be hard to combat without the concentrated efforts of the municipal governments and the appropriate ministries. Neither subsidy from the IMF, World Bank, USAID, nor PHARE and EU support will be sufficient alone without addressing the causes of these fundamental problems. Just how this will be done in the future will also be a test for Hungary's democracy.

Poverty and unemployment are, to be sure, two of the main contributing factors to the social malaise, dissatisfaction of the masses, and the rising rate of crime characterizing the 1990s. The parallel growth of criminal elements is another one. It has been a shocking revelation to most east Europeans, that with privatization of economic enterprises, the creation of large family firms, the decentralization of the financial sphere, and the reorganization of the country's resources - both tangible and intellectual - that an increase in illegal and criminal activities has ensued. While between 1970 and 1988, the number of reported crimes reveals a moderate growth from 122,289 to 185,407, from 1988 to 1998 this figure jumped to an eye-opening 514,403.²⁹

With such an increase of reported criminal activities the nature of crime has also changed drastically. A noticeable feature is the steady rate of growth in crime committed by youth: while in 1991 6,200 youth received

28 "Why the poor are poor", *The Hungarian Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 144, 1996, p. 78.

29 Figures are from *Magyar Statisztikai Zsebkönyv 1988*, p. 93, and L. Korinek, "A társadalom emésztési zűrzavarai" (The problems of social indigestion), in Kurtán, Sándor and Vass (eds.), *Magyarországi politikai évkönyve 1997-ről*, p. 295.

sentences, in 1995 8,717 did, with a slight decrease to 7,447 sentences in 1997³⁰

With the 1990s, Hungarians have been introduced to heretofore unimaginable brutal and large-scale violent crimes that would provide excellent scripts for Hollywood blockbusters. As citizens have begun to mention the existence of various “mafias,” they watched with amazement how the Serbian professional serial killer, by the name of Magda Marinko, laughed as the judge read the decision sentencing him to life; or, equally shocking, when the sensationalized media case of a Ukrainian family business manufacturing home-made bombs for sale made the national headlines. Hungarians also had to get used to the idea that their cities, and not only the capital, are now connected to international criminal activities. In the decade between 1990 to 2000, there were numerous bomb attacks claiming dozens of lives. In 1997 alone, there were forty-one bombings in Hungary, seventeen of which were committed in the nation’s capital. The most notorious of the bombings, however, was the 1993 bombing of the Hungarian Parliament, and the July 1998 bombing in downtown Budapest where four individuals, including innocent bystanders, lost their lives.

Even though Hungarian criminal statistics reveal that Hungary still fares reasonably well compared to crime-infested western European states,³¹ the

30 More specifically youth crimes declined considerably during the “transition period” to an all time low in 1991, and had begun to increase towards the mid-1990s. See, *Népszabadság*, August 5, 1998, p. 5. However, it needs to be mentioned that these figures do not measure up to the 11% of total crimes committed by youth in the 1980s. Youth crimes peaked in 1986, when 10,574 youth were sentenced by the Hungarian courts; see J. Molnár, *Életkor és bűnözés* (Age and crime), Author publishing, Budapest, 1996, p. 126. Another aspect of crime statistics is the rising rate of crimes committed by children: in 1997 alone, 4,287 children were registered for crimes, but an all-time high number of criminal activities (7,000) were recorded with children participants; see “Gyerekek hétezer buncselekményben” (Children in seven-thousand crimes), *Népszabadság*, August 25, 1998, p. 5.

31 Two figures scholars use for comparing crime rates cross-culturally are the number of criminal acts per 100,000 citizens and the doubling-rate of crime (i.e. how many years does it take for the number of reported crimes to double). For instance, when compared to western cities Budapest is still among those that rank the lowest, well below that of Paris, London, and Hamburg. However, what has been unique to Hungary of the 1990s is the doubling-rate. According to Korinek, while in Germany, Great Britain and France it took an average of fifteen years for the crime rate to double between 1950-1980 to increase fourfold. In Hungary, on the contrary, between 1971-1990 the crime rate doubled in twenty-one years, but a doubling of the crime rate took place between 1990 and 1992; see Korinek, *ibid*, p. 294.

widespread nature of serious corruption and the rise of other white-collar crime cannot go unnoticed. A good indication of just how serious this has become is the fact that the entire leadership of the police force was dismissed twice, first in 1996 and then in 1998, the latter reshuffling followed the victory of the center-right coalition. Nevertheless, organized and white-collar crimes created the most sensationalized media cases: Hungarians learned the names of J. Lupis, the self-made banker who received a sentence for embezzlement; Z. Tribuszerné, jailed for nine years but who managed to flee Hungary before her incarceration; J. K. Boros, Hungary's number one oil-mafia chief blown up and J. Fenyó, perhaps Hungary's most visible media czar, gunned down in broad daylight on the busy streets of downtown Budapest both in 1998;³² J. Stadler, a former shepherd turned entrepreneur, who created the first privately owned soccer team in Hungary and who received several years prison sentence for tax evasion and fraud; and M. Tocsik, an accountant and real-estate agent who tricked the Hungarian government out of hundreds of millions of forints as a fee for her services in shady real-estate transactions, are other instances of a new, criminal type.

What these names reveal is that the new capitalist spirit brought into Hungary an alarming rate of criminal corporate and illegal tax activities. These have prompted the National Tax Office (APEH) to double its efforts at tax audits from 137,000 in 1994 to 286,600 in 1997; this has been followed by the creation of the National Tax Police in 1999.³³ The following simple calculation for the rising number of known white-collar crimes is revealing in this respect:

	Customs and foreign currency crimes	Counterfeit money	Tax and insurance fraud
1994	2224	688	183
1997	2612	901	953

(Source: *Népszabadság*, August 5, 1998, p. 4).

³² This horrendous crime deserves special attention for several reasons: first, Boros was connected to the largest mafia in Hungary, known as the "oil mafia" while also providing important information to the police; second, between 1996 and July 4, 1998, when he was blown up, Boros was attacked five times but escaped unscathed; and, finally, when on July 4 the bomb went off, besides Boros three innocent bystanders also lost their lives. On the involvement of Boros with the oil mafia and well-known underworld figures see, P. Cseri and Á. Féderer, "A bombauzlet" (The bomb business), *Népszabadság*, July 25, 1998, pp. 21-23.

³³ J. Bencze, "Hangsúlyeltolódás a gazdaságvédelem feladat-és eszközrendszerében", in Kurtán, Sándor, Vass, *ibid.*, p. 575.

While Hungary's financial situation remains solid, with about 23 billion dollars of foreign debt, and a decreasing inflation (13-14% in 1998 reduced to 9% by 2000), Hungary's banking system reveals both the successes of privatization following the collapse of state socialism and the cracks in the system of new, unbridled venture capitalism. By 1993, when Hungary possessed five large banks, the country could proudly boast one of the most stable banking sectors in the former Soviet bloc ahead of the Czech and Polish republics. After the 1993 - 1995 consolidation of the banking sector, paying off debts, and reorganization of the management, the majority of Hungarian banks became foreign controlled with the exception of the National Savings Bank (OTP) that is still largely state-owned.³⁴ With all these privatizations came the shocking news in 1997 of the collapse of Postabank. It was Hungary's second largest bank, founded in 1988, a year when the signs appeared on the horizon that the days of communism were numbered. This story resulted in a three-day mayhem throughout the country, when thousands of customers withdrew over ten billions of forints from their savings accounts. This created a temporary crisis for Postabank in 1997, but the socialist government of Gyula Horn decided to bail out this ailing financial institution. However, trouble was far from over. As international and OECD observers noted, Postabank, and its media-star president, Gábor Princz, continued to commit serious blunders by investing wholeheartedly and unwisely in real estate, media, culture and sports.³⁵ These excesses - sponsoring newspapers (Magyar Nemzet, Magyar Narancs), theaters (Vigszínház), sport clubs (the Hungarian water-polo team), and extravagant advertising campaigns (the Postabank mascot, the teddy bear, became a household name in Hungary) - created a constant shortage by depleting the bank's assets, a reason why the tax payers' money had to be used by the Horn government to save Postabank. The victory of Viktor Orbán's center-right government cost Princz his job and also those of the whole executive board of the Postabank, a radical move followed by a complete reorganization of the bank's assets and activities.

34 For instance, Magyar Hitel Bank (MHB) is owned by ABN-Amro; the second-largest bank, Postabank is a joint venture with large Hungarian shares; K & H is owned by a consortium of Belgian-based Kredietbank and Irish Intercontinental Bank; the Hungarian Foreign Trade Bank (Magyar Külkereskedelmi Bank) is owned jointly by Bayerische Landesbank and the EBRD; the Central European International Bank is split between five international owners and the National Bank of Hungary; and in 1997 the Hungarian Privatization Agency sold the agricultural Mezőban to the Austrian Girocredit AG.

35 See, A. Lieven, "Hungarian banks stronger after braving pain of reform", *Financial Times*, September 11, 1997, p. 2.

With this, however, the story of one of Hungary's miracle banks, and its long-time maverick president, came to a halt. Other sectors of the financial world also experienced similar collapses. In 1998 alone, six large brokerage firms (largest among them was the notorious Globex Brokerage) were closed down, a necessary step on the part of the Hungarian Stock Exchange to save small investors.³⁶ This move, moreover, also signaled some of the fears uttered by the opposition circles: namely, the concentration of power on the part of the Orbán government. Just how these fears materialize in the twenty-first century will be the litmus test for both the FIDESZ-led government and Hungarian democracy.

Youth and civil society

For a little more than thirty years, between 1957 and 1988, Hungarian youth was led by the communist party's organ the KISZ, or the Communist Youth League. This organization monitored activities of all youth even though the KISZ wanted to be the organization of the politically conscious vanguard youth. After the 1956 revolution the communist leadership was eager to recover the lost youth, youth who participated in the revolutionary street fights. By the end of 1957, altogether 170,000 young men and women were enlisted in the KISZ nationwide; in five years, this number had increased to 708,000 (Eperjesi, 1981:94). It seems beyond doubt that the new institutionalization of age - those between 14 and 30 - under the aegis of the KISZ provided Hungary's ruling apparatus with an exclusive and even decisive edge in forming a new hegemonic hierarchical system. This type of political socialization was so successful that by 1986 913,000 people between the ages of 14 and 30 were claimed by the leadership as members of youth organizations, representing slightly more than 38% of the eligible age group - of which 48.1% were women and nearly one tenth were also members of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party. The purported role of KISZ, similar to that of its Soviet counterpart, the Komsomol, as the vanguard of youth, together with its constitutional mandate to complete the political, ideological, cultural and emotional education of youth were, it would appear, compromised and even undermined by its failure to represent a majority of Hungarian youth.³⁷

Károly Német, a former Prime Minister and Politburo member, summarized the purpose of the KISZ in the following message:

³⁶ *Magyar Nemzet* October 10, 1998, p. 10.

³⁷ For the first systematic treatment of the Soviet Komsomol see Fisher (1959); cf. also Riordan (1989).

It is important to note that when our Party called into existence the KISZ, in 1957, its aim was to create a unified youth organization in order to fulfill one task, perhaps with different means where applicable, to represent the ideology of the Party and to enlist the masses of youth to our cause. The way we formulated it at that time was that only politically committed and conscious young people should be admitted into the KISZ. This axiom holds true as well today (Német, 1985:23).

These words and concepts may well be familiar to anyone growing up under a state socialist educational system, for since the late 1950s, there had been little change in the wording and meaning of these official texts. Primary in this ideology were the “creation of socialist men and women,” “socialist morale and consciousness”, “patriotism and internationalism”, and the overtly politicized nature of youth. For the state the “youth-for-the-future” ideology legitimized the existence of the single youth organization under the leadership of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party. All these expressions were part of the ideological legitimating linguistic discourse familiar to Soviet bloc societies since the establishment of communist rule.

The KISZ should not, however, be seen in isolation from either the HSWP, the adult world, or the world of children monitored, as it was, by the Pioneers’ Association. The HSWP did not directly deal with the Pioneers’ Association; select KISZ members, for example, were entrusted with that job. A small percentage of KISZ youth was also involved with the Youth Defence Guard (Ifjú Gárda), a paramilitary organization similar to the HSWP’s own Workers’ Guard (Munkásorség). These units were the real backbone of the system: they were the highly trusted and carefully selected men trained to fight and, if needed, to bear arms in defending the communist state. In a sense, all the rhetoric of the international peace movement notwithstanding, communist ideology - especially following the 1956 uprising in Hungary - paid great attention to the militarization of society in general and youth in particular.

Socialist ideology was replete with slogans about “fighting,” “winning,” and “achieving.” All work, art and education were supposed to have socially redeeming value for the socialist state. For this reason, not only work and education but also recreational activities and entertainment were politicized out of proportion. For instance, the KISZ operated youth clubs all over the country: in the schools, workplaces, factories and research institutions youth were supposed to visit these to learn, to socialize and to enjoy themselves. Similarly, most sport clubs and sporting events were also directed from above. This constant politicization of labor and cultural life was supposed to both cater to the needs of youth and to control youth.

Naturally, more than 50% of Hungarian youth, who were not card-carrying members in the KISZ, were also connected to its various activities. Youth who did not comply with the prescribed ways were marginalized. However, the forced directives to create a politically mature and conscious age-group, who would be the ideal reserve army for the HSWP as well, did not reach their aims, for most of the members were becoming more and more indifferent to the organization's political language as well as goals.

Neo-nazi and skinhead subculture

What happened to youth as state socialism was loosing its grip on them? In retrospect it is easy to identify several areas where the collapse of the socialist state created major havoc for youth. For example, the disinterest of young people in politics and party membership in the 1990s may, indeed, be the result of this forceful political socialization under state socialism. As I have been able to ascertain among young workers (Kürti, 1998b), youth became so disillusioned with party politics and ideological political language that membership in political organizations is simply a joke for them. Another interesting aspect of youth policies at the moment is that state ideologues and party leaders themselves are lost. Because of the memories of the official youth policies under state socialism, most state planners are weary of single directives and a unified youth policy. It is also the case that Hungarian governments since 1990 simply cannot create a genuine youth program without either providing a platform for governmental ideology or simply becoming a sociological mouthpiece of welfare reforms. During the last decade of state socialist rule, youth who were disillusioned with the KISZ and the communist party were more and more enthralled by elements of international youth culture and the consumerist drives of the time.

As I have argued above, extremist youth subculture was, of course, part of the underground punk-rock scene of the 1980s in Hungary just as elsewhere in the socialist bloc (Kürti 1998a, 1998b, 1997a, 1995).³⁸ The organized racist and neo-Nazi skinhead movement of the 1990s, however, is something totally different. What are the specifics of Hungarian racism and violence perpetrated by skinhead groups against ethnolnational and religious minorities? The most important development of the early 1990s has been the emergence of extremist youth gangs and skinhead organizations which make systematic use of a neo-Nazi ideology based on both the historic interwar antecedents and contemporary international

38 These have been aptly demonstrated in Ramet (1994) and Mursic (1995).

offshoots. With regard to the participation of youth in these, we can immediately ask the question: is the lack of alternative legal, social, political, and economic frameworks within which they might participate and demonstrate their youthful attitudes and values really a problem? I believe that the answer is a resounding yes. As the October 1995 student demonstrations in Hungary indicate, only the educated are able to form coalitions and mount successful nationwide actions.³⁹ It is evident that since 1990, most young people who were socialized by the socialist states have not been organized in any collective and systematic fashion. It is also apparent that the post-1989 political parties largely forgot about them, even though most of the parliamentary parties possess some sort of youth factions.⁴⁰ The post-communist Hungarian governments have also been groping in the dark, trying to find a way to reorganize youth clubs, youth parties, and youth movements that (1) do not have the taint of the former communist organizations; (2) provide a valid framework for young people; and (3) serve the genuine interests of this generation. Because of the lack of adequate governmental attention, young people are an easy target for nationalist organizations and propaganda. Since there are no legally binding limitations, except the law that forbids open hatred against another nation or minorities, extremist organizations find it easy to manipulate youth into loosely structured and highly visible groups of their own.

I do not wish to suggest that the political and cultural ideologies of the Komsomol-like youth party were in excellent shape either at the time of the collapse of state institutions in 1990 or in the vacuum that was left in its place. On the contrary, as I argue above, before 1990 centralized state and party institutions functioned in a way that facilitated the creation of disgruntled and frustrated youthful citizens. Many, due to this, rapidly abandoned the communist organization and immediately shifted their

39 The Hungarian student demonstrations aimed at eliminating the recently introduced tuition fees in Hungarian institutions of higher education. The demonstrations ended in a truce: the students accepted the idea of a minimum tuition fee, and the government promised that for one year it would not raise that amount. See "Diáktüntetés a tandíjrendelet ellen" (Student demonstrations against tuition), *Népszabadság* (5 October 1995), p. 1. In Slovakia, to give another example, tension between the Mečiar government and students was averted in 1995 by implementing long-term, low-interest student loans. In Romania, a series of demonstrations to eliminate tuition fees were organized by university students during October and November 1995.

40 My articles on working youth in Hungary describe the last years of the Communist Youth League, its activities and the disinterested nature of young people in them (Kürti 1989, 1990).

membership into new institutions that had as their aim to be “western”, “anti-communist”, and “national”.

The moment of transition - between 1989 and 1991 - was the period when independent youth groups emerged with a vengeance. Bright prospects were described and the leaders of the newly formed political parties made political promises, but none of these could materialize at the time. Moreover, as former state enterprises were shut down and tight budgets forced governments to cut services, youth were the first ones to feel the consequences. Economic marginalisation, homelessness and poverty may be contributing factors that explain why some youth are increasingly involved with violent crimes as well. Since 1985, the number of crimes committed by youth under the age of twenty has increased considerably, and almost doubled since 1980. What gives even more cause for worry is the violent nature of youth crimes, a situation that can be easily discerned from the simple data below (Kerezsi, 1997:9).

Date	No. of Crimes by Juveniles	No. of Crimes by Children
1980	6,535	2,680
1985	9,449	3,745
1990	12,848	3,744
1995	14,321	4,169
1997	13,544	3,689

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1997.

What is noticeable from this table, however, is that in 1997 the number of crimes committed by those less than 20 years of age actually showed a slight decrease. To a certain degree this has to do with the fact that - following in the wake of increased youth violence and its concomitant public outcry - the legal system, the courts and the police developed concentrated efforts to combat racist and skinhead violence (Csendes, 1997: 29).

Why would youth turn to crime? There are several explanations. Economic and political marginalisation of large masses of youth is clearly one explanation. The situation of Hungarian youth during the 1990s has been analyzed by various authors (Bella, 1994; Mátyási - Szabó - Madár - Vajda, 1995; Nagy, 2000). Most of these works argue that working-class youth have been one of the main losers in the process of transition (Gazsó

and Stumpf, 1995; Kákai, 1996-97). Youth policies were under constant attacks by the various regimes of the 1990s. The paternalistic state attempted to control the lives of youth as before: youth institutions were monitored from above, moneys were allocated by the state, and main directives were identified without consultation with youth organizations. In 1998, the new government of Viktor Orbán decided to create a single ministry, the Ministry of Sport and Youth, which would cater to the needs of young people. However, despite its name, the Young Democratic Party-led government “cares more about sporting activities than about youth policies that concern the 2.5 million youth” (Nagy, 2000: 205). This criticism has, in fact, been raised many times with regard to the official stance of the Ministry of Sport and Youth and the youngest minister, Tamás Deutsch, in the Orbán cabinet.

Nevertheless, it is true that after compulsory army service - a hold over from the communist past, though since 1998 young men have to serve only nine months instead of a year as before - a good percentage of young men find it especially difficult to integrate into society. This is made even more painful by the fact that privatized companies generally do not rehire them after their compulsory nine month army service.⁴¹ These circumstances, then, sharply divide younger generations on an economic basis. While it is true that some may benefit from the current liberalization and privatization efforts, most are not so lucky. They experience only unsettled living conditions, unemployment, poverty, and, in turn, increasing marginalisation.⁴²

41 According to information released by the Hungarian Office of Labor (Országos Munkaügyi Központ), roughly 10,000 of the 40,000 youth who do not obtain an elementary or high school diploma - 123,000 high school graduates finish every year in Hungary in any given year - register at unemployment offices nationwide. What is even more peculiar is the fact that most high school graduates who do not find jobs are unable to receive unemployment benefits because they are unable to prove any previous (legal) work experience - a questionable requirement with regard to these youth. See “Egyre kevesebb fiatal talál állást” (More and more youth cannot find jobs), *Népszabadság*, (13 November 1995), p. 5.

42 In an interview with the head of the Youth Office at the Ministry of Culture, Erzsébet Kovács, “Paternalista módon a fiatalokon nem segíthetünk” (We cannot help youth by simply patronizing them), *Magyar Nemzet*, (2 November 1995), p. 6, proudly boasted that for 1996, money allocated for youth was projected at 310 million Hungarian forints (roughly U.S. \$3 million), a considerable rise from the earlier sums.

Recent estimates, for instance, stress that the number of drug users may be as high as 53,000 with an additional hundred thousand people who are also involved with drug on an occasional basis.⁴³ Drug consumption is, of course, a worldwide phenomenon and the globalization of popular culture also entails the globalization of drug trafficking. Yet crimes, drugs, and the marginalisation of youth, are only one aspect of the fundamental changes that have affected Hungary since the early 1990s.

What else characterizes Hungary's youth who, finding themselves in the midst of all these tumultuous changes, have increasingly been involved with racist activities? From observing activities of the racist right, it is obvious that what the communist youth organizations of the 1970s and early 1980s were, the skinhead subcultures of the mid- to late-1990s are not. The former were supposed to be mass based, internationalist, centralized, peaceful, democratic, sports loving, gender balanced, and uniformed. Hungarian skinhead subculture is extremely localized, anti-democratic, sexist, nationalist, violent, and exclusivist. The two characteristics that seem to connect them are subservience to an ideology and adherence to a uniform. Furthermore, organized neo-Nazi youth groups wage an avid anti-drug campaign in their programs, while liberal organizations often raise their voices in favor of a more lenient drug policy.

Like their predecessors of the 1960s and 1970s, youth of the 1990s gladly turned to the international youth fashions of the day. In this, skinheads in Hungary and the East in general are not that different from skinheads of the West. In particular, Hungarian skinheads view Germany, Great Britain and the United States as sources of support. It seems that since the beginning of the 1990s, with the free implementation of communication technologies, worldwide neo-Nazi and skinhead fashions have been accepted all over the former communist bloc. Skinheads in the East all use Nazi and nationalist ideology and symbols as bases for their historical legitimization. They don the swastika or their national variants (the *árpásáv* in Hungary, the arrowed double-cross in Slovakia, the skull and the double-headed eagle in Russia), black shirts, jackboots (Doc Martens), and bombardier jacket, and, as a rule, shave their heads. Thus, in many ways, the extreme xenophobic and racist messages of the nationalists are immediately obvious to the outsider.

43 Although there are no reliable estimates as to how many young people are drug abusers, most scholars would agree that it is on the rise since the early 1990s; see, *Népszabadság*, June 19, 1997, p. 1.

There are three general target groups of skinhead attacks in Hungary: the Gypsies (Roma), Jews, and foreigners in general. Among the foreigners attacked we find Arabs, Chinese, and even a few Romanians (many often “mistaken” for Gypsies because of their “darker complexion”). The racist, neo-Nazi discourse, however, is flexible only to a certain extent but rather straightforward in its violent outbursts. In many writings and speeches, the Roma populations and the Jewish subculture are often referred to as “foreigners” or elements “alien” to the national culture. Gays and “liberals” - many of whom are simply equated with Jewish intellectuals - are also described as aliens in Hungary. It is useful to recall one such tirade from a racist and extremist publication, the “Pannon Front:”

In order to achieve their own rule, liberals are pushing the Roma ahead of them like a Trojan horse; once they become the rulers they will simply discard them, as a useless mass; the Roma, however, do not see this manipulation...A foreign culture could be beautiful on its own natural terrain but not when it exports its cheap dirt.... A real culture should not exist as a parasite on another culture ...When St. Stephen advised his son, Prince Imre in the eleventh century, to accept foreigners, he did not advise him to accept dirt spread by the crazed UFO believers and homosexuals.⁴⁴

This expresses adequately the general ideology of neo-Nazi organizations; moreover, it also indicates how it manipulates Hungarian medieval history to justify some of its claims.

While skinheads of the 1980s were just skinheads imitating western rock bands, from the early 1990s on they proudly refer to themselves in their own literature as “national youth” (nemzeti ifjak), many of whom follow the semi-official organized Nationalist Youth Association. The date for the appearance of the neo-Nazi movement is credited to two figures, István Györkös and Albert Szabó, who founded the Hungarist Movement in April 1993. Its credo is like a straightforward repetition of Ferenc Szálasi’s own motto, who wanted to create a racially pure Hungaria in the interwar period, a semantic derivation of Latin origin and a reference to the new Nazi Hungary:

Our goal is Hungaria, our road Hungarian National Socialism, our deed is our honor, and our means is order. One will: order. One power: the movement. One ruler: the nation. Our vocation is order: our fight is our movement. Our victory is Hungarism.⁴⁵

44 See, the lead article by the editor Pál Péter Józsa, “A lesántult faló” (The lame Trojan horse), *Pannon Front*, 3/3, 11 November 1997, p. 2.

45 This program was reprinted in “A Hungarista Mozgalom 1939 - es nemzetépítő tervéből” (From the 1939 program of the Hungarist Movement), *Magyartudat*, vol. 3., no. 5, 1997, p. 4.

The use of Hungarism and the Hungarist Movement is a testimony that, at present, organized neo-Nazis view themselves as heirs to the 1944 Nazi paramilitary organization that can be credited with the brutal and inhumane attack on the Jewish populations of Hungary at the end of the World War II. István Györkös is a well-known xenophobic nationalistic figure who was charged but eventually acquitted for wanting to establish the Hungarian National Front (Magyar Nemzeti Arcvonal), an extreme right-wing organization in Hungary in 1992. The Hungarist Movement takes its legitimacy from its 1944 Arrow Cross antecedent and the Arrow Cross' executed leader, Ferenc Szálasi.

The other self-proclaimed leader of neo-Nazi skinheads is Albert Szabó, a forty-year-old Hungarian émigré who returned from a seven-year-long Australian exile to Hungary in 1992. Facing constant legal battles, on October 1993, Szabó attempted to create perhaps the most xenophobic and racist organization in Hungarian history: the World's People's Ruling Party (Világnemzeti Népuralmista Párt), a group that was immediately banned by the authorities.⁴⁶ Later Szabó - who shaved his head to express his unity with his youthful followers - reregistered his political party, with slightly different goals, with the courts in Budapest. This time he was successful: he called it the Hungarian People's Welfare Association (Népjóléti Szövetség, MNSZ). To begin with, on 18 January 1994 several meetings took place, all well attended by skinhead youth, during which open references were made to the "just" cause of the Hungarian Arrow Cross movement of 1944. Even its anthem was revived and sung, though with a slight change to assuage the state authorities. The MNSZ publication, "Goal and the Way" (Út és Cél), was printed in a makeshift fashion, but that did not stop party organizers from distributing it all over Hungary.

The MNSZ considers 15 October an official "national holiday". For the Hungarian extreme right, this day marks the occasion when Ferenc Szálasi rose to power in 1944. For this day, as well as on the birthday of their Fuehrer, demonstrations are always planned at key sites such as Budapest's Dohány Street, a one-time Jewish ghetto, where a beautiful restored synagogue stands today. Other street-rallies also take place at the graves of the 1956 revolutionaries. The organization appeared in public for the first time as a real show of force in 1995. That year, however, the police did not permit the demonstration in front of the Jewish synagogue, for according to its planners that demonstration was aimed solely at "lessening the Jews'

46 This name is interesting for many reasons: for one, it embraces all right-wingers and extremists as one "nation"; for another, it aims at ruling the whole world, hence its "ruling party" epithet.

self-image of being the chosen nation". Maybe this denial prompted the skinhead Nazi organization to counter with a double march: on 22 and 23 October 1995 when Szabó's MNSZ organized several skinhead youth marches in Budapest to counter the state celebrations of the 1956 revolution. A few hundred skinheads came from various cities and nearby towns, but most were from the outskirts of Budapest. After gathering and singing at certain key locations, they marched to the Hungarian Radio demanding a public announcement of their program. When this was denied, they sang "Awaken Hungarians" - a World War II Nazi song - and disbanded with the "Heil Hitler" salute. Several marchers carried the new Nazi flag of red and white stripes with red sunrays in the middle, others its western European variation, red and white with a black cogwheel in the middle.⁴⁷

What is clear from these parties' programs is that the extreme right in Hungary identifies itself with the Hungarian version of the Nazi ideology and the Übermensch philosophy. This identification is coupled with chauvinistic and racist nationalism - assertions that Christians and Hungarians are definitely "better" and "more cultured" than Gypsies and Jews, both of whom are described in right-wing propaganda as "foreigners" or "strangers". In the ideology of neo-Nazi groups a fine distinction is drawn between themselves and those "unwanted elements" whom they do not consider to be "worthy" of living in Hungary and the Hungarians who continually suffer because of the influx of strangers and "unwanted elements" who live off the national wealth. The right-wingers aim at "educating the Hungarian youth by teaching them the proper Hungarian history and Hungarian consciousness".⁴⁸

Already at the end of 1994, both Szabó and Györkös were charged with racism and inciting anti-foreign and xenophobic feelings, but eventually, by the decision of the Supreme Court, the trials were postponed for lack of

47 After this demonstration, Hungary's minister of internal affairs, Gábor Kuncze, immediately urged that laws be enacted to explicitly ban the use of fascist symbols. Árpád Göncz, Hungary's president had already submitted such a plan to the Ministry of Internal Affairs in February 1995; it was then forwarded to the parliament. The modification of the 1978 law - which deals with this issue but does not proscribe such actions - was later legalized by the Hungarian parliament. See Kuncze: "A fasiszta jelképek használata felháborító" (Using fascist symbols is upsetting), *Népszabadság*, (25 October 1995), p. 1.

48 The trial proceedings have been excerpted in "A magyarságtudatról a Fovárosi Biróságán" (Hungarian studies at the courts of Budapest), *Új Magyarország* (2 November 1995), p. 5. The decision is published in "Felmentették Szabó Albertet" (Albert Szabó is acquitted), *Népszabadság*, (5 March 1996), p. 5.

evidence. When the Hungarist Movement and the MNSZ increased their activities, the Hungarian authorities could not simply look the other way, and in the fall of 1995, the Supreme Court, backed up by new laws banning the use of Nazi national symbols, moved against them. Györkös, Szabó, and György Ekrem Kemál, and several of their cohorts involved in Nazi propaganda were charged with racist, anti-humanitarian activities by “inciting against the public”.⁴⁹ Since the new Hungarian criminal law continues to have many loopholes, mainly the clause legitimizing freedom of speech and the expression of ideas - a notion also proclaimed in the Hungarian constitution - both Nazi leaders were allowed to remain free while defending themselves in court. The 4 March 1996 decision of the Budapest Supreme Court acquitted both men and their organizations, allowing them to remain free to continue their rancorous activities.⁵⁰ Despite the lower court’s ruling of not guilty, civil rights organization continued to press charges against them. In early 1998, the Supreme Court of Hungary dismissed the charges against both men, justifying its decision and referring to the constitutional freedom of free speech.

Since Hungarian criminal law does not utilize the notion of “hate crimes”, the court’s decision was based on the finding that the charge of “inciting against the public” was not supported by the facts. Both the state prosecutor’s office and liberal intellectuals (including the Hungarian Gypsies’ Anti-fascist Organization, the Hungarian Zionists, and the Raoul Wallenberg Association) were outraged, insisting that displaying Nazi symbols and publishing anti-Semitic journals, prove the charge of “inciting” beyond the shadow of a doubt. Seeing perhaps the lenient attitude of the court, on March 15 1996, Szabó organized the most boisterous street marches after the court case; he verbally attacked all foreigners in Hungary and announced that by the fall of 1996 his group would take over the whole country. When he appeared, Szabó greeted his audience, mostly skinhead youth, with “Better Future” (Szebb jövőt) and a “Heil Hitler” salute.

49 See, “Vádirat a hungaristák ellen” (Charge against the Hungarists), *Népszabadság*, (6 October 1995), pp. 1, 4. For a careful reading of Hungary’s constitutional battle over the freedom of speech and the neo-Nazi attempts to capitalize on it, see János Kis, “Szólásszabadság és náci beszéd” (Freedom of Speech and Nazi Speech), *Népszabadság*, (30 March 1996), pp. 17-21.

50 It is clear that much infighting also characterizes the Hungarian Welfare Association and its Hungarist Movement faction: at the end of 1997, Györkös was dismissed as the latter’s leader and replaced by Béla Kántor, a Hungarian émigré living in Australia; see *Magyartudat*, III, no. 5, 1997, p. 4.

Szabó's movement has become more and more sophisticated since the mid-1990s. They have managed to raise some money, both from foreign and local sources, to publish their new racist journal *Magyartudat*, "Hungarian Consciousness". It is the official publication of the Hungarian Welfare Association with Albert Szabó as its ideological Fuehrer and publisher-editor. This newspaper not only published a letter from Saddam Hussein and reprinted a picture of General Pinochet, but also published an article by John Peacock, leader of the British National Party extolling the virtues of British nationalism. Szabó visited their headquarters and was successful in creating an alliance between the Hungarian and the British parties in July 1997.⁵¹ The Hungarian organization has connections to other extremist parties in the West as well: there are Danish, German and French connections; there is, moreover, a Hungarian "New Order" (Új Rend) operating in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, and another neo-Nazi organization in Australia, both of which provide assistance to their counterpart in Hungary.

What is also revealing of the seriousness of the neo-Nazis is that the Hungarian Welfare Association has managed to organize its own skinhead youth faction: the Nationalist Youth Association (Nacionalista Ifjúsági Szövetség), whose leaders openly declare "social nationalism" and "Hungarism" as the ideological basis of their movement. They celebrate their nationalist identity by wearing small swastikas as well as listening to the music of the extremist rock band "National Front" (Nemzeti Front) that also sells its own CDs all over Hungary (another hit-seller group is "Healthy Skinheads"). Some of the leaders of this skinhead organization are not unemployed, as the major media tries to claim, but work in their own security company, called "Civil Guard Co".⁵² Three youth of the MNSZ were charged with racially motivated aggression against two Africans in 1999 in Budapest, a crime that resulted in several years of jail sentences for all perpetrators in early 2001.⁵³

The other Nazi youth leader, György Ekrem Kemál, was not only a key figure in starting the Hungarist Movement but also involved with

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 8.

⁵² As claimed by several newspapers, this security organization is not legal, but it nevertheless openly advertises its activities that is "a right of every honest Hungarian citizens to defend their rights by all legal means"; see *Magyartudat*, III. no. 5, 1997, p. 2; and "Fegyverkeznek a hungaristák" (The Hungarist are defending themselves), *Népszabadság* November 7, 1997, p. 23.

⁵³ The report was printed in *Népszabadság*, March 17, 2001, p. 21.

organizing his own neo-Nazi faction illegally. Since late 1994, Ekrem Kemál - whose Turkish father was executed as the result of his involvement in the 1956 revolution, especially the street-fights of the Széna Square - was known to the authorities through the boisterous street marches with his skinhead followers under the banner of his "The Communism Persecuted Association" (KÜSZ). Since this was not a legally registered party, the courts, strangely enough, could not disband it. Only once could they charge Ekrem Kemál with public indecency when he threw eggs at a presiding judge administering a verdict on those involved with the order to fire on the demonstrators in 1956 in the city of Salgótarján. Ekrem Kemál paid the fine: he offered ten thousand forint in single coins.⁵⁴ However, when a criminal committed suicide in March 1997 as the result of a bungled robbery attempt, police were able to track the criminal to Ekrem Kemál's residence. Although weapons were not found, it became clear that the robber was a member of KÜSZ and a close ally of Ekrem Kemál. At this point it is still a speculation for the specific neo-Nazi connections and the sources of the weapons. It has become known to police that some illegal weapons sale took place between Hungarians and Slovaks on the Hungarian-Slovak border.⁵⁵ It was also revealed that although the weapon charges against the Nazi leader were not solid, he could still face charges of trying to overthrow the government by forceful means (Criminal Law, 1989, 139/A). Nevertheless, members of the KÜSZ and its leader are still actively involved with neo-Nazi skinhead activities, as the January 1998 cemetery demonstration (remembrance commemorating the birthday of Hungary's 1944 Arrow Cross leader) and the regularly held February 13 rallies (to honor the final outbreak of Nazi troops in surrounded Budapest in 1944) amply indicate.⁵⁶ Facing mounting public and international pressure as well as serious legal consequences, however, Szabó decided to leave Hungary and to abandon his immediate ideas in transforming the country's political landscape. At the moment, it is only Ekrem Kemál who stands virtually alone in Hungary as a self-proclaimed ultra-right and neo-Nazi

54 See, "Börtön a hungarista vezetőknek?" (Jail term for the Hungarist leaders), *Heti Világgazdaság* July 12, 1997, p. 76.

55 See "Garázdaságért pénzbírságot kapott Ekrem Kemál György", *Népszabadság* (27 January 1996), p. 13. The weapons charges were reported by police during the fall of 1997; see, "Robbanóanyagok Szlovákiából" (Explosives from Slovakia), *Népszabadság*, November 18, 1997.

56 Monika Török, "Nyilas vizkereszt" (The Arrow Cross' Epiphany), *168 Óra*, January 13, 1998, pp. 10-11. And *Népszabadság* Online "Árpádsáv és trombitaszó," February 14, 2001.

leader. His ideology, at its core, includes the demands to rewrite the existing Hungarian constitution, and to create a bicameral parliament. He is bent on creating a legal political party, aptly named Hungarian National Freedom Party (Magyar Nemzeti Szabadságpárt), and to enter the legitimate political arena. Clearly, he is aware that with current liberal laws in effect it is difficult to illegalize extremist and ultra-nationalist right-wing political organizations. If his fundamentalist ideology gains more popular ground - a highly unlikely scenario at the moment - his party could make the nationalist Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP) look like an innocent boy-scout organization.

Aside from this membership in these formal organizations, youths have also been independently involved with racist and neo-Nazi propaganda. Most of these instances have been extremely small-scale and isolated local events. Some, however, were successfully connected to legitimate political parties and their front-runners. Thus, it is safe to argue that when a democratic state has a sound legal and crime prevention system, such events never manage to blossom beyond their immediate confines. The situation, however, can change as soon as these actions are publicized in the national or international media. In the beginning of 2001, for instance, the Internet home-page of the University of Pécs contained some highly questionable articles describing extreme right-wing ideology and the African-American presence in the politics of the United State of America.⁵⁷

Perhaps the most well known cases of the 1990s, no doubt sensationalized by the media, are the bombing of the parliament building in 1993 and the booing of the president during his commemorative speech at the parliament in 1993. Although originally a certain group of the "national youth" and "skinheads" was implicated, no one was finally charged. Hungarian television made several detailed analyses of the videotapes showing skinheads hanging out in front of the parliament, and then being taken away by police. It seems clear that they were not involved directly with organizing the boisterous anti-presidential event. It is clear, however, that what can be credited with such "successful" occurrences was the general rightward swing of mood at the time. A good indication of this involved the disenchanting expatriate Áron Mónus, who upon returning to Hungary published a book (*Conspiracy: the Empire of Nietzsche*), an act that was followed by several public "performances" and boisterous media events extolling the virtues of the infantile Hungarian democracy allowing

57 See, Népszabadság Online, February 14, 2001 "Szélsojobb és antifasiszta kínálat a Magyar hálón."

the freedom of speech. Eventually, Mónus was acquitted of charges of racism and unconstitutional activities, but he was ordered to undergo psychiatric examination.⁵⁸ Mónus, however, was one of the key persons in assisting the publication of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, a book forbidden in socialist Hungary. As a result of the growing trend of publishing Nazi propaganda, a Budapest court ruled in November 1996 that all dissemination and publication of Hitler's book would be illegal. Following mounting pressures from concerned human rights organizations, in particular the Hungarian Jewish Church, one year later the Hungarian Supreme Court ruled that the Hungarian translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* would not be allowed to be sold in bookstores anymore.⁵⁹

However, it is not only in Budapest where racist and neo-Nazi groups stage media campaigns and publish offensive materials: throughout the countryside extremist activities tend to be more widespread and in certain instances more violent. In November 1994 in the northern city of Eger, the local court took action against a seventeen-year-old man and a sixteen-year-old woman, charging them with crimes against the community and inciting a riot.⁶⁰ The two perpetrators were high school students publishing a racist and anti-Gypsy pamphlet, "The Eger Awakening" (*Agriai Virradat*).⁶¹ The court was quite slow at first and three issues had been made available to skinhead clubs, including the infamous local tavern "Cadaver Castle" (*Tetemvár*), before the authorities were able to crack down on this underground group. The man, without the knowledge of his parents, was able to utilize the computer facilities at the high school while his girlfriend used her mother's company's copier. The pamphlets had the clear purpose of uniting various skinhead factions all over Hungary. In the inaugural issue, the skinhead group of the southern city of Makó proudly boasted of its large and its continually increasing membership; in another issue, Nazi propaganda of the 1930s and 1940s were reprinted. The last

58 Mónus, however, appealed against this order; see *Népszabadság* (12 October 1995), p. 5.

59 See, "Betiltották a *Mein Kampf*ot" (The *Mein Kampf* is illegal), *Népszabadság*, November 18, 1997, p. 22.

60 "Vádirat a rasszista kiadvány ellen" (Charges against racist publications), *Népszabadság*, (9 October 1995), p. 20.

61 The Hungarian name of the journal "The Eger Awakening" uses the town's old Latinized name, *Agria*, a clear reference to the city's troubled history in the sixteenth century when it was successfully fighting against the Turkish armies. In the youths' minds, that heroic past - the locals' victory against foreign intruders - serves as a model for getting rid of the unwanted "elements"; for them these are the Gypsies!

issue consisted of an especially vicious attack on the Gypsies of the city of Eger in specific, and the Gypsy population in Hungary in general. Its tone was outright racist and Nazi in its support for the Gypsies' physical extermination. Such anti-Gypsy sentiment and racist ideology does find outlet in quite unexpected circumstances. In the northeastern town of Bag, in the beginning of 2001, a group of riot police broke into a Roma family's home and attacked worshippers who were holding a funeral wake. At the end of the attack, several Roma men were badly beaten and arrested. The police spokesman claimed that the police search of the private home was fully in compliance with the law. As the claim goes, beatings and extreme force was used since they were searching for fugitive criminal elements and, especially, because Roma men put up a considerable fight resisting arrest.

As I have described earlier, at the beginning of the 1980s Hungary witnessed the emergence of a vital youth subculture (Kürti, 1991; 1994). In this period anti-communist youth supported the development of a musical subculture aided by the radical, often xenophobic and racist, underground punk rock scene. In this, it was inevitable that some of the groups - most notably the short lived but extremely influential Mos-oi, T-34, CPG, and ETA - created an image for themselves that was both radical and anti-state, and, at the same time, overtly nationalist, sexist, anti-foreign and anti-Gypsy.

Reflecting on these early events, I now firmly believe that the appearance of the underground punk subculture, with the participation of extremist musical groups, was essential to the development and success of an anti-state democratic youth movement in Hungary. These, in turn, facilitated the creation of an anti-communist and anti-authoritarian popular mentality. It was clear, however, even at that time, that the state and the court, as well as the democratic and liberal opposition, accepted with resignation such racist, xenophobic, and anti-humanitarian messages. These groups, influential as they then were, disappeared quickly as many of their practitioners were fined, jailed, and faced court action. What remains, however, is the message "Gypsy-free zone", which has continued to be a slogan of racist skinheads and nationalist youth active in the beginning of the third millennium.

With regard to the music culture of Hungary, I must mention that in the beginning of 1997 a CD was published "Rap and punk against fascism". However, some of the song makers made a major mistake for their songs are filled with hatred and open prejudice against Hungary's German minority. Several opposition politicians are also singled out in the songs. With

democracy in full swing, it looked for a while as if some of these anti-fascist and anti-racist groups would have to face court actions because of their intolerance and hateful music.⁶² However, the Budapest district court ruled in early January 1998 that the charge was not warranted, although it emphasized that individuals targeted could file civil suits against the music makers if they wished to do so. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the racist skinhead music scene has been revitalized since 1996 with the appearance of organized neo-Nazi groups. At the 1997 Christmas concert several groups - among them the White Dawn (Fehér Hajnal), Secret Opposition (Titkos Ellenálás), and Romantic Aggression (Romantikus Erőszak) - performed their usual nationalistic, hateful music that points to the continuation and vitality of skinhead groups and organizations in the guise of rock music. At the end of 2000, moreover, the notorious CPG reappeared to stage concerts to nostalgic audiences, individuals who are not just unbridled youth anymore but citizens with positions of power and voting rights. And these latter points are what give some worry to the nature of civil society developments at the moment.

Conclusions

What is clear from the above is that Hungarian civil society is developing a unique path of its own: post-socialist politics entail an unprecedented clash of state and society.

What is interesting in the current state of civil society in Hungary is that uncivil aspects also strive together with more civil and positive elements. Extremism in Hungary, as I have argued in the beginning of this chapter, has been left outside mainstream and parliamentary politics. In fact, Hungarian parliamentary political life seems rather stable, grounded in firm political convictions about multi-party, constitutional democracy: the number of parliamentary parties is almost fixed in the popular mentality, no governments collapsed between 1990 and 2000, and, aside from a few squabbles, scandalous corruption cases, and chilling personality conflicts that are standards in any political system, there was no kidnapping of politicians, no fistfights among the “fathers of the nation” (honatyák), a euphemistic term in Hungarian referring to members of parliament. Unlike in dissected Yugoslavia, Romania, and Slovakia, Hungarian democracy

⁶² See “Kisebbséget sértő punkdalok” (Anti-minority punk songs), *Népszabadság*, November 17, 1997, p. 29. One song especially is offensive to the German speaking groups in Hungary when it says: “Racism and neo-Nazism, racist dreams, these were the ideals of the bold, lice-infected Germans.”

does not favour extreme politics in the parliament. Neither the extreme right, nor its left counterpart has a place in the parliament. It seems that at the moment, civility is on the side of the state.

This, however, cannot be said about society. Forms of extremist actions, views and values find outlet on the streets, media and everyday parlance among those who feel unwanted, left out, or simply wish to be left out. Unemployment, poverty, youth crimes and anti-minority attitudes are clearly just a few aspects of the unwanted consequences in the transition from state socialism to a democratic polity. It would be too easy to argue that all political and economic developments may be credited with creating large masses of disgruntled and dissatisfied youth who turn against fellow citizens to vent their anger and aggressive impulses. The following list will sound familiar to those living and studying East Central European societies. The rearranged political and religious life in Hungary is certainly one of the main problems. The political vacuum created by the collapsed state institutions and the communist party, and its youth faction, the Communist Youth League, left youth with no immediate institutional support to fall back on when they were in need. Even though there are detectable conservative and right-wing attitudes prevalent today in political discourse and the popular media (Simon, 2000), the new political parties left a large percentage of youth outside their realm. As a natural consequence a considerable percentage of young people are finding their new communities within alternative religious, semi-political and extremist milieus. The transformed economic sphere is the other major source behind the social malaise characterizing former Soviet bloc countries. No matter how we look at it, large masses of unemployed and economically marginalized populations were simply unknown during forty years of state socialism. Where would youth turn to when in need? Who would listen to their problems? Many youth have found refuge among extremists, communities many are now calling "ours". Regardless of this ambivalence and vagueness, the sense of community exuding togetherness and solidarity has been important to youth within the racist and extremist subculture.

What about more internal and more complicated answers to the question of uncivil aspects within the sphere of democratic developments? For one, and this has been proved by several mainstream studies on youth violence and aggression, youth as an age group in formation tend to swing to extremes at certain key moments in social, economic, and political crises. In this, western European, or North American youth are no exception. "Paki bashing" in Great Britain, or German youth with the "Türken Raus" and Heil Hitler slogans committing horrendous acts are well known cases publicized

in the 1990s. Football hooliganism and vandalism, or mayhem at rock concerts cannot be solely tied to any particular country or national traditions. British, German, Italian, or American fans have all been known to participate in such violent and aggressive acts. The FIDESZ-led regime, once calling itself a party of those under thirty-five years of age, has desperately attempted to control both youth violence and the indifferent political attitude rampant among youth. It spent considerable funds to mount an advertising campaign called "Be a fan, don't fight". In the beginning of 2000, the FIDESZ-led government of Viktor Orbán created a Hungarian Youth Conference (Magyar Ifjúsági Konferencia), an overt political transnational umbrella organization to unite youth especially in Hungarian communities outside of Hungary, a policy in line with the centre-right government's national ideology of unity and togetherness of the Hungarian nation. It would be rather flippant to claim that just how influential these policies will be in the near future will be a litmus test of Hungarian civil society.

For, aside from these attempts, there are more unwanted processes among youth. What is important, however, is that in many ways they, mostly because of the availability of information and international media, have been learning from other youth movements elsewhere in the world. According to a recent survey on Hungarian youth 33% between the ages 15 and 29 identify themselves with right-wing and centre-right ideology, and only 20% with left and left-liberal values of the political spectrum.⁶³ This may be a specific feature in the East and Central European landscape. What is also a notable and less positive development is youthful participation in extremist, racist and neo-Nazi movements. In fact, many extremist groups now benefit from the high-tech international cyberspace and Internet world that project a reinvigorated sense of legitimacy. Many of these groups now often are truly transnational and neo-Nazis marching in Budapest, Eger or other cities in Hungary, are increasingly tied to an international extremist network. Their rank-and-file members may include Czech, German, British, Danish and Canadian fellows. Just like the radical greens or left ecology groups who may now count on an increasing number of international followers (see Davosh, Prague and other violent clashes), uncivil extreme racist or rightist movements are not tied solely to a particular native soil or tradition. What is specific though is the way in which their actions and movements are rationalized and nationalized by utilizing language, tradition, past mythology or political events. In that sense, Hungarian neo-Nazis celebrate Hungarian fascists from the World

63 See the report "Youth 2000" in *Népszabadság*, March 17, 2001, p. 5.

War II era, a historical celebration paralleled in Romania, Slovakia, or even Serbia. With regard to youth extremism it must be continuously emphasised that anti-Semitism or anti-Gypsy movements are not novel to Hungary alone. They have been reported elsewhere in Europe as a whole as well. What are new are their extent, frequency and timing. Their emergence from the mid-1980s is especially noticeable in this part of the world, the former east bloc, a region attempting - at times too hard and seemingly too eagerly - to conform to ideas deemed European, western, democratic and civil. In this an interesting development is taking place at the moment: there are both democratic values and quite undemocratic ones challenging each other.

Democracy, as mentioned in the beginning, is a process that needs to be tested, contested and negotiated by all social actors. This is one of the most important lessons that we can learn from being conscious in living in a society that prides itself to be at once democratic, civil and liberal. The other is that Hungary, together with the other democratic central European states, need to critically reassess their roles in the globalized new world and, more importantly, renegotiate their status with their former socialist allies (Wiatr, 2000: 10-11). To do so, however, a healthy and balanced self-criticism of the results of the transformation is inimical.

And, finally, the lessons learned from the data presented may be of value not only to other Eastern Central European states but also to states within the European Union who are ready (or willing?) to evaluate ongoing social processes in this region. While the information above provides for evidence of the developmental processes of post-socialist Hungary, one major general conclusion is evident: that democracy and civil society may be incongruous in some social settings. In other words, civil society may exist, although in rather difficult circumstances, when undemocratic conditions and the lack of the rule of law persist. The reverse, as the situation of youth and extremist movements in Hungary indicate, may be equally true: that democratic state power and governance is no assurance for the flourishing of progressive and liberal civil society. As David Held convincingly argues, democracy is a double-sided phenomenon "concerned, on the one hand, with the re-form of state power and, on the other hand, with the restructuring of civil society" (1987: 283). This is a fitting definition for democracy in Hungary at the beginning of the third millennium.

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Young Authors' Perspectives on Identity

Personal Identity as a Concept of the Self

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The question of personal identity is originally the question of congruence: What makes me believe that I am identical, congruent in my personal features, with the person I was yesterday, five years ago or even as a child? Although my physical appearance, my abilities, habits and social environment change over time, I feel that I am not losing myself - my Self - in these changes, but remain the same somehow. My self-consciousness tells me that I am still the same "I" in spite of all changes and will always be this same "I" as long as I live. This "I" cannot be replaced by or confused with any other person, it is individual, unique and as such deserves its own dignity and respect. This general, unreflected feeling of being someone special and congruent goes together with cognitive concepts of what contributes to my being myself and thus being different from others. Cognitive concepts of the Self - of the Self as the object of my own perception - try to systematize more or less stable features that are used to define the Self as unique in the mass of other social beings and as identical in changes over time. Self-concepts can thus be regarded as the subjective views of individuals on their own personal identity.

A variety of psychological theories have been developed on self-concepts. The Self is seen by some authors as the inner part of personality, by others as an individual's potential, as a role or as a portrait that people draw of themselves. Nevertheless there seem to be four common characteristics of a self-concept. The first general assumption proposes that a self-concept deals with the Self as the object of perception and knowledge. It is furthermore thought of as a hypothetical construct that the individual forms in order to assure a consistent perception and evaluation of the world and to grant consistent reactions to it. Two basic components can be distinguished: knowledge/cognitive aspects and evaluation/emotive aspects. Finally the construct is regarded as a multidimensional system

consisting of important (central or core) elements as well as less important (peripheral) elements. Since the core components have to be stable in order to fulfill the individual's need for self-integrity and the possibility to explain and predict one's own behavior, they tend to be general as opposed to specific descriptions, for general assumptions cannot easily be shaken by counter-evidence. The self-concept "I am a good musician", for example, is so broad that it can compensate for the experience of not being able to keep the rhythm when dancing, while the self-concept "I am a good dancer" is more restricted and less resistant to the influence of such single events. The examples moreover illustrate the two main motives in constructing self-concepts, namely stability, as mentioned above, and self-esteem, that is the need for self-respect and a positive self-image. In order to have these two functions fulfilled, the existing self-concept may either lead to a selective perception of information (for instance, when choosing partners for conversation or competition) or a selective procession of information (for instance, which feed-backs to adopt, which to ignore consciously). On the one hand the self-concept is thus based on and results from the individual's concrete experience with its surrounding, on the other hand it influences and pre-structures the occurrence and interpretation of exactly this experience.

Besides analyzing the general structure and function of self-concepts, attempts have been made to distinguish different Selves according to the content of the concept. Authors like James suggest a differentiation between spiritual, social and material Self, others such as Neubauer refer to categories of the physical Self, the concept of individual abilities and talents and thirdly social Selves. Theories like these suggest that self-concepts differ in the kind of information they process. These distinct Selves may furthermore be of different importance to a person's overall self-concept; yet each of these self-concepts constitutes a part of the individual's identity. In the opening presentation of our seminar, Thierry Verhelst proposed a definition of identity as being "composed of new, more or less imagined or created elements and of older, more or less 'given' elements" such as, for instance, sex, age or anatomical peculiarities. The "physical Self", for example, would, according to this definition, consist of both given elements - for example being male, young and tall - and constructed features - for example being beautiful or athletic. Theories of self-concepts as they are introduced in this essay would argue differently: of course physical premises offer themselves as features to be noticed and evaluated about oneself; it is up to the individual alone, however, to attach meaning to them and integrate them into central or peripheral parts of the self-concept. Age

or physical handicaps can be regarded as given elements of a person's physical constitution, yet it depends on the persons concerned alone whether they take up these elements to define themselves, whether they connote them in a positive or negative way etc.

A second important point of discussion concerning the issue of identity besides its subjective, constructed characteristics can be found in the question of social influence on personal self-concepts. The thesis about "given", natural features playing a special role in self-concepts appears to be plausible in so far as these characteristics tend to be visible to others and are thus often attributed to the individual from the outside. A closer look at my own personal "physical Self" may illustrate that personal views cannot avoid interacting with the active reactions or even mere presence of others. Although my size marks me as extraordinarily small among German young women, it is not my size, but the blonde color of my hair and my blue eyes that distinguish me, for instance, from young women from Spain or France in the setting of an international seminar. Thus the characteristics I identify with in a certain context might shift according to the points of comparison I find in my surroundings since different features are perceived and reflected as outstanding and special. While being blonde and blue-eyed constitutes a very peripheral part of my personal physical self-concept in every-day life, these components seem to be rather rare or supposedly "typically German" in a non-German environment, so that people address me with remarks on these features although they are less central from my own perspective. I am identified - in the passive mode - as the blonde woman with blue eyes and small glasses, "obviously" from Germany. Here the notion of a collective, in this case a national identity comes in: as in stereotypes, physical or mental features are attributed to whole groups and transferred to the groups' members, which are then categorized as either typical (as in the case of the color of my hair and eyes) or non-typical (as to my small size or my usually not being punctual). Even though I personally might consider these stereotypical points of interest as peripheral or even non-existing components of my own self-concept, I am confronted with my social Selves as they are assumed from my surrounding due to my being a member of larger social systems like a family, a professional group, the population of a region or a nation. These assumptions may be expressed in explicit comments or may, at least, exist in forms of hidden, even sub-conscious expectations. To identify oneself with a certain group in fact means to agree to a certain congruence between one's own self-concept and the assumed collective identity of the chosen social reference group.

I was asked to write about identity among young people in my country. One of the most important latest scientific analyses of the situation of young people in Germany is called "Jugend 2000" ("Youth 2000").¹ This study covering young people from 15 to 24 years of age is special in so far that it begins with a qualitative approach on different topics like politics, religion, values or social relationships in order to get the teenagers' own ideas and categories within these topics. The questionnaire's scales for the following quantitative study are then built on these categories emerging from the interviewees' own perspective. This design tries to avoid the possibility that questions imposed from the outside miss the real concerns of today's youth and thus result in an inappropriate, misleading picture of their views. "Jugend 2000" included almost 800 young people in qualitative interviews and more than 5,150 young people in quantitative research. Interestingly enough, the study explicitly evades the term "national identity" since, as it says, the idea of a homogeneous, integrated collective identity has been destroyed, so that "the German" or "the Germans" do not exist, but only individual images of Germany and Germans as a nation etc. (p. 306). Consequently the researchers did not ask the teenagers to what extent they would feel to be German or what being German means to them, which might belong to the "imposed" categories to be avoided; instead they posed the questions of how the teenagers saw Germany, which themes were important to them in order to deal with this topic and how they would evaluate them from their point of view (p. 309). More specific impulses used in the qualitative interviews were for instance: What occupies your mind when you think of „the whole society"? Which feelings go along with these ideas? Do you have any special wishes or fantasies about Germany or Europe for yourself, for your own life? Which ones? Four scales about the image of Germany resulted from these basic qualitative interviews (p. 310f):

Scale 1: Missing Joy Of Life And Warmth

(In Germany most people are cold to one another; Germans do not know how to live; they live to work; they lack joy of life and calmness)

Scale 2: Germany As a Civilised Country

(German culture is rich; social rights are highly developed; Germans are professionally well educated; they are very sensible)

1 Jugendwerk der Deutschen Shell (ed.), Jugend 2000, Opladen 2000.

Scale 3: Predisposition because of the Past

(Germans have hardly changed since Hitler; something like under Hitler can happen in Germany anytime again; many Germans are still nationalists; there is strong racism in Germany)

Scale 4: Reserve towards Foreigners

(Many Germans are afraid of other cultures; they are arrogant towards others; many Germans are open-minded; many are bureaucratic and fussy)

Three out of these four scales reveal sober, critical tendencies. While scale 2 constitutes the only positive category, it is striking that these positive items mostly do not refer to any kind of "German nature" or "national character", but to social achievements. Scale 3 emphasizes the great influence of Germany's Nazi-History on today's young generation.

"Jugend 2000" tries to give an answer to the question as to why groups of German youth vote for a rather optimistic view of Germany, for example stress a civilized and non-nationalistic character, neglects a lack of warmth and open-mindedness. One might guess that students with a good education tend to be very critical and therefore judge in a negative way. The opposite seems to be true: it is the rather positive image of Germany that is supported by those teenagers with a good education and good resources, especially by young men from Western Germany. The results for all scales indicate that the image of Germany is more positive for boys compared to girls, for older teenagers compared to younger ones as well as for young people from Western Germany compared to those from Eastern Germany (p. 312ff). The researchers interpret these figures as follows: Better education, good prospects and resources lead the teenagers to a more relaxed attitude which allows them to appreciate the advantages of Germany's social achievements; underprivileged young people, on the other hand, tend to be harsher in their criticism and might experience a lack of warmth and open-mindedness more intensely (p. 315). At one point of the analysis the researchers correlate these images of Germany with the figures for xenophobia. Amazingly, those teenagers who show a more hostile attitude towards foreigners reflect a more negative image of Germany than the average group (p. 318). According to the authors of "Jugend 2000", xenophobia correlates rather with a fear of competition (for jobs, for attention, for financial support) than with a proud, positive image of one's own country. This fear of competition is said to prevail in weak social groups with low education (p.20), so that underprivileged teenagers prove to have a tendency both towards hostility against foreigners and towards

criticizing their home country. The views of young people coming from a foreign background² show a greater profile in their scope. The general image of Germany of Turkish or Italian teenagers is neither more positive nor more negative than that of German teenagers, it simply goes more to both extremes: they turn out to be more decided when underlining positive achievements and when criticizing problematic aspects (p. 325).

"Jugend 2000" offers one approach to the attitude of young people from 15-24, with or without German citizenship, towards the country they live in and towards Germany's inhabitants as a group. The study mostly reveals moderate, sober views that allow for (self-) criticism concerning cultural achievements as well as social attitudes. Over-enthusiasm and unreflected pride in their home country seems to be an exception among German Youth. In everyday life this reluctance about "being proud to be a German" can be observed in the rare presence of national symbols like flags in private homes. Showing any kind of national pride is easily regarded as being extremist, based on a nationalist attitude, and is usually followed with social sanctions from the environment. Germany's history at the beginning of the last century has led to a great social sensitivity about nationalist politics and its despicable consequences - a sensitivity that is still vivid in today's young generation as, for example, the emergence of scale 3 proves. The existence of neo-Nazi-groups especially in Eastern Germany constitutes a dangerous counter-movement that receives great attention in the national and international media. The neo-Nazis' national ambitions and xenophobia can, according to "Jugend 2000", be interpreted as being primarily based on social fear and the experience of being disadvantaged and underprivileged. The researchers therefore suggest not only to argue against "right" theses and milieus, but also to introduce political programs to support education and create jobs so that the feeling of having to compete with foreigners for a basis of living decreases (p.20). If we combine the general sober image of Germany, that appears to prevail among Germany's youth, with the tendency to create a positive individual or collective self-concept, we may conclude that a "German national Self" does not belong to the core elements of young people's identities. Since "Jugend 2000" found out that European integration is of hardly any interest and importance to young people (p. 329), it will be smaller social units than the EU or the nation state that serve as reference groups for their collective identities.

2 German citizenship was taken as the criterion

Which Type of Identity Prevails among Young People in Bulgaria?

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The following thoughts do not seek to explore or even attempt to explain the stunning (if not perturbing) recent election results in Bulgaria (June 17, 2001). Instead, they represent a rather eclectic opinion, which is also very subjective (if not personal) on some contemporary developments in Bulgaria. I would like to take the recent election results as a point of reference that might suggest a numinous dimension in Bulgarian identity.¹ Although this dimension pertains to and persists more on a subconscious level it could offer material for plenty of discussion on the “rigidity” and “malleability” of the concept of identity (especially when taking into consideration the self-awareness of young people in Bulgaria).

I am taking as my point of reference the seemingly surprising (but very well orchestrated and premeditated) landslide victory of the former Bulgarian child-king Simeon Saks-Koburg. Some interpret this as a radical change in the political scene as well as in the civic culture; for others it was just the opposite - a reactionary backlash against everything that the difficult transition has managed (or failed) to achieve ever since its inception at the end of 1989. However, what both sides of this debate fail to emphasize or simply gloss over is the pivotal dimension of Bulgarian identity: to change (seemingly abruptly) beyond the comprehension of

1 I would be rather wary of using the adjective “national” when speaking about Bulgarian identity, simply because I am approaching the subject from my own point of view. I am not convinced in the actual existence of a “national” (in the widely perceived sense of this word, not even in the sense of an “imagined community”) outlook in Bulgarian society; besides in some very generic terms, of course. I am fully aware that there are many that would disagree with this opinion, but, nevertheless, I am staying firmly behind my conviction.

common sense, or at least contrary to what one might expect. Yet, if one were to look at the generation that is anticipated to take responsibility for the direction of the political, economic, and cultural life of the country, he or she would encounter people who are in their late twenties and early thirties. They have been teenagers at the time of the “change” from communism to democracy took place, nevertheless old enough to remember what it was like in “the Old Days” and still to comprehend what was going on around them. This generation in the course of the 1990s grew into maturity with the coming of age of the new Bulgarian democracy. These young people attended political rallies; screamed their hope for better life at rock concerts; enthusiastically organized and took parts in strikes and demonstrations that toppled governments; later on got disillusioned with the ubiquitous partocratic elite, which took advantage of their naivety; in the end a great number decided that they should take their future in their own hands and some left the country altogether, others stayed and tried and still try to eke out a living (but the majority of them are hoping that someday they would be able to leave the country and try their luck abroad, too). My main point however is to emphasize the flexibility of this generation to adapt to the multifarious changes and challenges that the surrounding social, political and economic environment has confronted them with during this process. To a certain extent, young people in Bulgaria proffer a new sense of *voluntary identity* which depicts the idea of an independent choice of individual identity accentuated by a more flexible understanding of cultural frontiers; it is an articulation of the conjecture of the past with the social, cultural and economic relations of the present. In other words, the concept of *voluntary identity* rejects ascribed and imposed identity, by privileging individual autonomy as opposed to the encumbrance of community demand for “a sense of identity as the reflection of an inner reflection of an inner ‘essence’”² It repudiates the concept of frozen identity and instead favors an assumption of selfhood as an infinite process of identity construction.

I would claim that this *fluidity* of Bulgarian self-ideation is an act of *pure* imagination, which although preconditioned by the social paradigms of perception, remained beyond its patterns and developed independently from its onerous designations and projected identifications. It suggests an attempt to open up spaces in the creative utterance of public discourse for the articulation of the suppressed silences of the wished-for future. This

2 Patricia Waugh, *Feminine Fictions: Revisiting the Post-Modern* (Routledge, London, 1989), p. 3.

pure imagination released the naked power of the potential (if not desire) for change. Its narrative actualization was an attempt to unburden individual consciousness from the imposed definitions of selfhood and offer it a chance for independent definition of its boundaries. Thus, this creative form of awareness went deeper and beyond mere protest. It became the locution of a new perspective on reality and given a chance through the electoral process this dimension of Bulgarian identity strove to conjure the reality of dreams by voting for a (supposedly) “different” political entity. The former Bulgarian king did not and does not represent a particular political, economic, or even social platform. Instead, he stands for an emotion felt by the overwhelming majority of Bulgarians: their desire to voice their disapproval, disgust and disillusionment with the bi-polar political model, which virtually silenced and marginalized them in their own country. For this very reason the “king’s party” was called a “national movement”, because this is what in fact it was: a group of people, who rallied together to express their feelings and hopes. Moreover “the Movement” (as it began to be called) ushered on the political scene young people in their mid-twenties and early thirties, who presented the new, or “the other” face of Bulgaria: educated people (some with significant work experience outside of the country), but most importantly unblemished by the political rabble-rousing of the past ten years. Ever since 1989 political leaders have appropriated the right to speak for the young people of Bulgaria, but “the Movement” was the first that actually gave them the chance (at least this is how it presents it) to speak for themselves and do something by themselves for their country. This is how, the former king paved his way to becoming a Bulgarian premier by playing on this flexible nature of Bulgarian identity. I would like to focus on the driving force behind this malleable and changeable self-articulation - the ideology of imagination.

In fact this would be an attempt to elucidate the conceptual grid of theoretical positions on Bulgarian selfhood as a project of the imagination. In a sense, this is an endeavor to clarify the relationships between facts and their explanations in the context of Bulgarian creative unity.³ No matter in what way, where and how they try to better their conditions of existence, young people recourse to a spark of the imagination to light their way in the redefinition of their immediate environment. However, prior to plunging

3 Which for me is the best definition of “Bulgarian nationhood”: an ever-continuing process of creative redefinition as to what the nation is. This concept of “unity” is for me (at least in the Bulgarian case) reciprocal to what others might call “nation”.

into the exploration of their interpretations, some definition of the key terms - ideology and imagination (as they are used in this research) - would be helpful for the further understanding of this endeavor.

Ideology is conceived as the idiomatic articulation of the vision of imaginative alliance. In a sense, it is a combination of a mediating role between the utterance of social knowledge (whose function is to organize different representations),⁴ with the mystification (in the sense of flexible exploration) of cultural and subjective phenomena.⁵ Thus, ideology became the peregrination between the different institutional sites of unity, which negotiated the modification of reality with the demands from the hopes and desires for change. This is what “the Movement’s” election campaign was so good at emphasizing: young people need not only utter their piece of mind, but also follow it up with their deeds; thus, giving them the opportunity to *make* Bulgaria the country of *their* dreams. This entailed a significant change in the bi-polar political imagination of the country.

Imagination (put simply) is the fuel of this ideology of the contemporary Bulgarian unity: it is this emotion that Bulgarians wanted to express, but so far no political platform had given them the chance to put across. Imagination is the ideas-churning locus that urged the people to be more resourceful in the creative interpretations of their immediate conditions of existence. It presented a particular reading of factual reality, which at the same time gave it its concreteness as a “unity of diverse elements”.⁶ This helped situate facts as interpretations, which (by inversion) made possible the factual reality of interpretations. In this sense, everything could be understood as always being just a version (out of many available, which gave the idea of unity its optimistic aura). Many Bulgarians were overcome by a new wave of enthusiasm (in some ways even more profound than the one in 1989) that “the Movement” is the epitome of the better road to future prosperity.

Thus, the ideology of imagination established itself as an alternative mapping of political relationships, effectively rewriting the contract between the people (viewed as the electorate) and the partocracy. It came as a juxtaposition of the different bases of Bulgarian unity, out of which

4 See Stuart Hall, *Drifting into a Law and Order Society* (Cobden Trust, London, 1980).

5 See Michèle Barrett, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991).

6 Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (MIT Press, Cambridge, 1971), p. 9.

emerged a narrative confluence between the sites of politics, society, economics and creativity, as an overriding compatibility with the articulation of individual desires for coexistence. The inverted locution of constructed reality brought forth an interpretation of this conceptual shift in the alignment of social conduct and political apparatuses, according to the manner in which the different systems of identification related to each other. Therefore, the ideology of imagination might be construed as a reaction to the parochial interpretations of historical exigencies and offered a “locus of resistance”⁷ for imaginative structuring of individual experience aimed at transforming the conditions of living. In this vein of thought, it provided a textual space for the utterance of the invented hopes for a prospective Bulgarian reality. What gave the ideology of imagination its durability was its role as a bridge between the world of politics and the world of imagination. For example the media suspense created through the publication of carefully targeted articles on the possibility or impossibility of the king’s participation in the election, stirred up the right emotions and struck the right cords that would awaken the sleeping hope of this fluid and changeable identity. In effect, the textual tale came to epitomize the imaginative unity of a community embedded in a vision of creative coexistence. Hence, the language of the envisioned place imperceptibly entered the discourse of political institutions in order to break the traditional hold of bi-polar political localism on the way people meaningfully related among themselves. The ideology of imagination developed into a controversial process of producing knowledge, in the sense of “an unveiling of being and at the same time an unanswered question as to the validity of this unveiling”.⁸ The articulation of this creative identity situated the solution of regional posers within the textuality of transnational determinations; beyond the limits of local or ethnic self (beyond the figures of local politics, and put its hopes of fulfillment at the foot of the dark-horse on the Bulgarian political horizon - the former king).

The three dominant motifs of this Bulgarian ideology of imagination were: *peregrination* between the reality of the desired and the unreality of existence; *modification* of the sociopolitical construct to accommodate the dream of unity; and *imagi-nation* of a security-community of readership. These elements were redolent of imagination’s profound outburst against

7 Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (Verso, London, 1992), p. 307.

8 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith, ed. Jonathan Ree (Verso, London, 1976), p. 7.

the boundaries of conventional perception. At the same time, these three mutually complementing and very often imbricating concepts formed the underscoring quiddity of the creative Bulgarian unity. It was in this way that the three faculties of the ideology of imagination were intertwined in the re-exploration of the fluidity of creative Bulgarian unity. The aesthetics of *peregrination*, *modification* and *imagi-nation* evinced the possibilities of inventive transcendence of the restrictions set up by political time and social space. The significance of this imaginative transposition of reality was the production of creative coalitions that could narratively be held together by the aesthetics of their unity. This involved an attempt to shape individual dispositions for the encounter between the promises offered by the “bright” political dream and the realities of everyday existence.

It is in this sense that the ideology of imagination can be understood as a *perception* that aimed to establish an alternative knowledge of reality; which in turn could be projected back onto actual life and endow it with options and possibilities to generate change. Thus, imagination can be viewed as an *exploration* “that may bring to light unpredictable resources”⁹ in its search for creative answers to conflicting issues. It endeavored to illuminate not only particular narrative forms, but also their reference to sociopolitical actualization. Many young people hoped that this is what would happen with the election of “the Movement” to power: the promises (which were their own desires as well) for a better life “in 800 days” (as the king said at the outset of his election campaign) would come true. This remains yet to be seen.

That is how this surreptitious aspect of Bulgarian identity, which the recent elections brought to light, reflected a belief in the power of the imagination to invent the political order through its creative sagacity, which established textuality as the hub of the symbol of unity dissipating the danger lurking in the figures of difference. This side of self-articulation is very much based on the principle of political pluralism, which would abolish the coercion of domination, but at the same time evinces a very extreme form of civic culture based on individualism. *I-magi-nation*¹⁰ - the individual as the multifaceted sorcerer constituting the sites for the reality of personal experiences - established the deliberations that introduced an idiosyncratic perspective on inter- and intra-social relations. The critical theory of this point of view posits that “social life is... the reign of

9 Wilson Harris, *Jonestown* (Faber and Faber, London, 1996), p. 75.

10 Suggested in a conversation with Prof. David Dabydeen, member of the executive board of UNESCO.

contradictions [whose] outcomes escape all rational planning”.¹¹ That is why the “need of magic” (Naipaul) together with the “need to turn to mythology to feel complete”¹² participated in the attempt to envisage a network of interdependencies that would provide the space for independent ideation.

In this context the results from the Bulgarian elections could attest to the vivacity of the will to change the environment in which people live, through taking the most unorthodox step to the future. The “rightness” or “wrongness” of this attempt is not at issue. What is important is that the Bulgarians’ (especially young people’s) concept of themselves is not taxonomized within some fixed paradigms or concepts, but on the contrary is still open and able to change and alter its mould. It represents a desire for a political environment founded neither on territorial, nor historical, nor ethnic attachment, but rather on the free will of the people to live in a creative coexistence. The change in the political scene conveyed a dream about choice: the individual’s choice to determine his or her own life; to either remain in a state of alienation or *adopt a story* for oneself and live it through, regardless of the consequences. This was also a statement that *life without an imaginary narrative* underscoring it was not worth living.

11 Santiago Castro-Gómez, “Traditional and Critical Theories of Culture”, *Nepantla: Views from the South* 1 (2000), 503-18 (p. 508).

12 Meera Syal, *Anita and Me* (Flamingo, London, 1996), p. 10.

The Young Croatians' Identity

**Ankica Kosic, Faculty of Psychology
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People can claim membership in a variety of groups in describing themselves. Ascribed categories such as gender, profession, political orientation, ethnicity, etc., are forms of identity that provide a basis for self-definition.

How are these forms of identity represented in psychological theories? Within Tajfel's (1978) theory of social identity, identity emerges from the context of intergroup relations. In making a presumably favorable distinction between one's own group and some other groups, the person is thought to achieve a positive social identity. Turner (1987) in his self-categorization theory, moves somewhat away from the intergroup context to consider the basic cognitive process of categorization. His analysis refers to three levels of abstraction in self-categorization, which are human identity, social identity, and personal identity.

Personal identity refers to those traits and behaviors that the person finds self-descriptive whereas social identity consists of those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which (s)he perceives himself or herself as belonging. Rather than being cleanly separable, social and personal identity are fundamentally interrelated. Personal identity is defined, at least in part, by group memberships, and social categories are infused with personal meaning. In addition, cultural identity is a part of social and personal identity.

Social groups and the membership of them are associated with positive or negative value connotations. Hence, social identity may be positive or negative according to the evaluations (which tend to be socially consensual, either within or across groups) of those groups that contribute to an individual's social identity. The evaluation of one's own group is

determined with reference to specific other groups through social comparisons in terms of value-laden attributes and characteristics. A major function of group identification and comparison, according to Tajfel, is the enhancement of self-esteem. In social identity theory, self-esteem is enhanced through favorable comparisons between one's own group and an out-group.

Identity can be represented as a hierarchical structure in which sets of identities are related to categories of features and attributes. Using this framework, one can address questions of position and salience. For example, one might ask which categories are the most salient in person perception. The position of an identity within the overall structure may have important affective and behavioral correlates.

I think that in Croatia, among territorial, national and regional identities, young people identify themselves more with the national group. In some parts of Croatia, they give importance also to territorial identity (e.g., Istria). Regional identity is less pronounced, especially if we consider the Balkans, which are associated with negative features. Maybe, in recent times the young have begun to accept some aspects of Balkan culture, for example, pop-folk music. An interesting and positive fact is that youth appreciate music, films and other forms of art of high quality produced in other republics of former Yugoslavia despite it not having been approved and always well viewed by the political powers. However, they are strongly oriented towards identification with young people in Western countries (in style of dressing, reasoning, amusement, etc.) in which the process of globalization supports them. Moreover, what I have perceived during the relatively short periods of permanence in Croatia in the last few years is that for young people ethnic identity is not so salient as for older people. Probably, they have understood that maintenance of a positive ethnic identity is not necessarily related to hostile attitudes towards other ethnic groups.

However, living in Italy, I am more familiar with Croatian young people who emigrated abroad. An important issue concerning identity has been the question of the extent to which ethnic identity is maintained over time when a minority ethnic group comes into contact with a host group. The members of minority groups are usually socio-economically worse off compared to the majority group, and they are often the target of discrimination. According to social identity theory, the disadvantaged group attempts - if possible - to move into the dominant group in order to

achieve (maintain) a positive social identity. If, however, achieving a positive identity by joining the dominant group is not possible there are alternative ways to maintain a positive identity. Examples could be by developing pride in one's group, or reinterpreting characteristics deemed "inferior" so that they do not appear inferior, or by selecting a new dimension of comparison, or shifting individually from social identity to personal identity and trying to get a positive self-evaluation in terms of personal identity. The process of immigrants' acculturation is stressful, not only from the point of view of lower socio-economical status and problems with language and job, but also because of the contact with the new culture and the loss of contact with the former culture and social group. In this process, immigrants may use four acculturation strategies: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization (Berry, 1997). These strategies are based on two dimensions: (a) relationships with the host and original groups and, (b) maintenance of the original culture and acceptance of the host culture. The assimilation strategy means that an immigrant rejects his or her original culture and group and manifests a great interest in acquiring the host culture and in seeking interaction with members of the host group. The strategy of integration refers to positive attitudes towards both the culture (original and host) and effective interactions with the members of both groups. People using the strategy of separation would place a value on holding onto their original culture and would associate almost exclusively with people from their culture. Finally, when there is little interest or possibility in cultural maintenance and in having relations with both groups and cultures, then marginalization is defined. However, the issue of cultural belonging for Croatian immigrants in Italy is not so problematic because our culture is not so different from the Italian culture (religion, food, etc.). The more stressful dimension concerns establishing social relationships and new friendships.

Among youth immigrants from Croatia, integration and then assimilation are preferred strategies of adaptation. Many people are well adapted: they have acquired the host culture well (language, knowledge of general Italian culture, etc.), have host friendships, and at the same time, maintain their original culture and contact with co-nationals. In the maintenance of their original culture the Croatian church and ethnic associations play a great role. Some people who frequently attend ethnic associations often have negative attitudes towards the host group and culture. They tend to have strong ethnic identity and territorial identity (they stay prevalently in the

company of other persons from their place or region of origin). However, I think that among our immigrants ethnic identity is not the most important and they are trying to get a positive self-evaluation in terms of personal identity (ability, personality, etc.) and in terms of belonging to other social groups (professional, cultural, etc.).

**Appendix 1:
Program of the Course**

Program of the Course

Sunday, 13 May 2001

Arrival of participants

6,30 p.m.

Hotel Lero: Welcome & cocktails

Monday, 14 May 2001

9 a.m.

Introductory session: Processes of cultural (re)identification in Europe
Nada Švob-Đokic, Miquel Strubell Trueta (course directors)

9,30 - 11 a.m.

Thierry Verhelst: The role of cultural identity in local development
and participative democracy

11 - 11,15 a.m.

Coffee-break

11,15 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Discussion

Lunch

5 p.m.

Dubravko Škiljan: Language and frontiers

Tuesday, 15 May 2001

9 - 11 a.m.

The International Cultural Cooperation and Networking

Marjutka Hafner: Regional cultural cooperation in the context of political
developments in Southeastern Europe. Case study: Slovenia

Nina Obuljen: Regional cultural cooperation: Position of Croatia

11 - 11,15 a.m.

Coffee break

11,15 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Workshop: A regional cultural perspective: the Balkans versus Southeastern Europe
Introduction and chair: Nada Švob-Đokic

Lunch

5 p.m.

Workshop: Understanding cultural differences, developing tolerance: The others and how do we see them in Southeastern Europe?
Introduction and chair: Sanjin Dragojevic

Wednesday, 16 May 2001

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Arts, Creativity and Cultural Industries in the Regional Setting
Milena Dragicević-Šešić: New values and new cultural identities/Narratives of representation (film, video, visual arts...)
László Kürti: Cultural imports and cultural identities.
Some Hungarian experiences

11-11,15

Coffee break

Lunch

5 p.m.

Workshop: Opportunities and costs of English as a world lingua franca: the situation in the Balkans
Introduction and chair: Sue Wright

Thursday, 17 May 2001

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Identity Formation: How Civil and How Social?
Melita Richter Malabotta: Immigration groups from Southeastern Europe in Trieste
Sonja Novak-Lukanović: Education and identification

11 - 11,15 a.m.

Coffee break

1 p.m.

Lunch

5 p.m.

Workshop: Mediating identity: the tangled web of media (re)production of cultural identities

Introduction and chair: Dona Kolar-Panov

Friday, 18 May 2001

9 - 11 a.m.

Civil Society and the Future of Multicultural Societies in Southeastern Europe

Boris Buden: Culturalization as depolitization

Discussion

11 - 11,15 a.m.

Coffee break

11,15 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Mark Terkessidis: New forms of identity construction in the West

Discussion

Lunch

5 p. m.

Workshop: Can the negative effects of stereotypes be avoided and how?

Introduction and chair: Miquel Strubell Trueta

Saturday, 19 May 2001

9 a.m.

Closing discussion: What remains worth mentioning?

11 a.m.

Excursion to the Elafiti Islands. Lunch on the boat.

Sunday, 20 May 2001

Departure

**Appendix 2:
Summary Report**

Summary Report

The course on “Redefining Cultural Identities: Southeastern Europe” was held at the Inter-University Center in Dubrovnik from 14th to 19th May 2001. It was the second course in the series started in 2000, when the theme was “Redefining Cultural Identities: Multicultural Contexts of the Central European and Mediterranean Regions”¹. The directors of the course were Nada Švob-Đokic (Institute for International Relations, Zagreb, Croatia) and Miquel Strubell Trueta (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain).

Thirty-two students from Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, USA and Yugoslavia attended this year’s course. Fifteen resource persons (or lecturers) came from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. Several observers took an active part in the discussions.

The professional background of the participants in the course was quite diversified. There were sociologists, cultural anthropologists, ethnographers, art historians, historians, philosophers, theologians, social psychologists, political scientists, media and communication specialists (including journalists), linguists, socio-linguists, lawyers and economists. A number of participants (both students and lecturers) had combined professional specializations and sometimes quite diversified experiences. What brought them together was their interest in Southeastern European regional developments.

The main objectives of both courses converged in an effort to assess the identity changes and to fully assert the multicultural character of the regions in question. This year’s course concentrated on the situation in Southeastern Europe, which was analyzed through international cultural cooperation, narratives of representation of identities, and the possible role of civil societies in building up regional links.

The program of the course was designed so as to link the issues of cultural identity redefinition with some practical aspects of regional links and

1 See *Redefining Cultural Identities*. Collection of papers from the course on *Redefining Cultural Identities: The Multicultural Contexts of the Central European and Mediterranean Regions*, Dubrovnik, 10-20 May 2000, ed. Nada Švob-Đokic, Zagreb, 2001.

cooperation. The background to this effort is provided by the widespread conviction that regional cultural identification endangers the established national and revived ethnic identities in Southeastern Europe. It may also put a question mark over the existing cultural links and some established types of intercultural communication. Multicultural approaches based on the acknowledgement of cultural differences have been developing for some time now. However, the region has not yet practically reached the post-multicultural stage in which the development of intercultural communication would be actively promoted. Such communication remains extremely weak, and it is hardly supported by changes introduced by the cultural, educational or media policies. Therefore, the need to question both the role of states and the role of civil societies becomes evident. That is why the discussion of stereotypes, the need to overcome them and eventually develop a genuine interest in cultures of others from the region was given ample space in the program.

In his introductory lecture on the role of cultural identity in local development and participative democracy, Thierry Verhelst presented a very wide range of the roles that cultural identities can and do play in local development processes and in participative democracy. Referring to the background research carried out by the Network Cultures from Brussels, he discussed the definitions and components of identity (multiple identities, identity formation, changing identities, etc.) and the impact of identities on the interactive relations and interactions on local levels. Identity is a generator of human energy that may lead either to creativity and openness, or, conversely, to defensiveness and exclusion. "An open identity can be seen as a narrative process with a concern for relationship. A close identity is related to the description of a static content leading to isolation, resentful opposition and, possibly, violence. The latter may cause a violation of human rights and dictatorship. The former has to do with emancipation and responsible democratic citizenship."

An extensive enumeration of possible roles that identities can play in local (and regional) developments may indicate the character of interaction between the established values and the need to exchange them through communication and further development of cultural links.

That is why cultural exchange and cooperation may be relevant for the overall perception of intra- and inter-regional links.

Can a regional cultural perspective be established as a framework for regional identification? The perception of the Southeastern European region was questioned in this respect. An overview of the two basic

interpretations of the region -the Balkans versus Southeastern Europe- was presented by Nada Švob-Đokic. Being an issue of “political and spiritual geography”, the opposition between the two concepts that have both been developed in Western Europe is reflected in the fact that the Balkans seem to be a more definite and developmentally less flexible concept basically related to the oriental cultural heritage, while the idea of Southeastern Europe has been developed through the Western imperial influences and related to the concepts of Central Europe. Such historical descriptions mirror certain neo-colonialist interests in the region that, according to the historian V. Dedijer, “navigates between imperialism and nationalism”. By taking over the concept of Southeastern Europe, the European Union tries to interpret it as a contemporary regionalist concept that functions all over Europe and enables dynamic European integration processes. Such an integrative interpretation that may contribute to the transformation of Southeastern Europe into a modern European region is based on flexible communication and exchange.

Marjutka Hafner and Nina Obuljen analyzed the regional Southeastern European cultural cooperation and cultural exchange on the basis of the case studies of Slovenia and Croatia. In both cases there are signs that “a stronger regional cooperation among the Central and Southeast European countries is needed”. However, the interests of the participating countries have not been clearly defined. In the case of Slovenia, an orientation towards neighboring countries and cultures is a priority; in the case of Croatia, the strategic interest is to secure links with the EU member countries. In both cases, regional cultural exchange is promoted through the functioning of the existing and emerging regional organizations and multilateral projects. Regional links seem to be gaining ground at the expense of bilateral ones. At the same time, cultural cooperation is becoming an ever more important part of the international links of the new states and appears to be useful in broadening regional cooperation. Bilateral relations of a predominantly political nature seem to be giving way to specialized types of exchange and cooperation, including cultural. However, such processes should not be limited to building up some kind of regional exclusivity. Most nations of the region would like to see the development of regional cultural cooperation as part of their overall approach to European integration. The formalized aspects of this process (signing of cooperation agreements and protocols) are of a limited value, easing somewhat the overall cultural communication and exchange, but they do not guarantee the development of such communication. It is prevented by the still unresolved issues among the ex-Yugoslav republics

(return of stolen cultural goods, negotiations on archives, etc.), but also by the rather fluid and inconsistent regional links. The main obstacles to a more intense and dynamic cultural exchange are to be sought in the absence of interest in other cultures of the region and in an explicitly stated willingness to turn to Western Europe rather than to the region itself. Intra-regional communication remains to a large extent burdened by the stereotypes on others and stereotypical approaches to other cultures, which were discussed by Sanjin Dragojević. As stereotypes reflect frozen images, they are easily used and very difficult to change. The rejection of stereotypes represents also a major problem, because it requires an active involvement in the process of redefinition of one's own identity and the identity of others. Stereotypes may prompt communication since they allow for an easy standardization of ideas. At the same time, they are easily manipulated and often misused, which may represent a serious obstacle in developing intercultural communication.

The issue of language and frontiers as a relevant aspect of regional identities was presented by Dubravko Škiljan. His analysis of the hard and soft language frontiers in the region of Southeastern Europe showed that political and language borders may not coincide at all. Southeastern Europe is distinctly multilingual and the languages spoken here are of different origins and nature. However, the South Slavic languages (from Slovenian in the west and Bulgarian in the east) are practically confined only to this region. The dynamics of their mutual (soft) borders reflect the recent regional political developments and conflicts. While most Southeastern European states are very much concerned with the internal differences between Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin, etc. and while the linguists are mostly preoccupied with the establishment of such differences, the use of other languages (Italian, German, Hungarian, etc.) is spreading. This reflects an intra-regional inconsistency, but also some processes of wider regional and European integration. At present, these developments seem to be clearly marked by an ever-growing use of English as a *lingua franca*, not only in the region, but also in Europe. Sue Wright presented some of the reasons why English has been so widely adopted in the Balkans and the implication this has for the communities who do so. The growing use of English as second language can be exclusionary as well as liberating; it may lead to further globalization of regional and national issues.

Arts, creativity and cultural industries reflecting new cultural identities were discussed by Milena Dragičević-Šešić, who concentrated mainly on the Yugoslav film industry. It was film production (perhaps sooner than

literature or visual arts) that put in question the previously established identities and some stereotypes regarding past times. As a dominant cultural industry, film production was rather quick in spreading and disseminating new interpretations of the old myths and historical Balkan values. It contributed to their abolishment and eventual rejection. At the same time, it promoted a kind of demystification of Serbian culture at the time when cultural myths were largely cultivated for political purposes.

Laszlo Kurti discussed some types of identification of the young generations in Hungary on the basis of recent research. The contexts for the new identifications are provided by the culture of capitalism and the culture of crime. Both notions are specific. Capitalism as developed in countries in transition is rather different from that known in Western Europe. It is inconsistent with market mechanisms and develops on the basis of redistribution of public goods through privatization. The culture of crime appears to be an inherent part of such capitalism and a new and previously unknown phenomenon in post-socialist countries. The extremist youth subcultures reflect both phenomena in a rather curious way. Professor Kurti presented the case of some Hungarian skinhead groups who import global conservative and fascist values through a specific type of their own socialization. In countries in transition, where socialization through employment and work is hardly effective now, and where the socialist value system is being replaced by a curious mixture of inconsistent values, young people tend to socialize through organizations (non-governmental ones) that are easily accessible both in the places where they live and on the Internet.

Civil and social aspects of new identity formations were discussed using the position of immigration groups from Southeastern Europe in Trieste as the case in point. According to Melita Richter Malabotta, ethnic identities are practically marginalized at the moment these people reach Italy. They all become part of an illegal workforce that might be treated better than immigrants from Africa or Asia, but who nevertheless remains at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Their main concern is economic survival and, eventually, integration into the Italian community through language skills and schooling of their children. This integration may be easier for Croatians and Slovenes, who are Catholics, and more complicated for Serbs and Macedonians, who are Orthodox and who tend to preserve some elements of their original cultural identities. In the process of integration, cultural and religious identity often prevails over ethnic identity. Since ethnic identification is not practically important, all ethnic groups from

Southeastern Europe have tolerable mutual relations and there are no conflicts among them.

Identification of minority groups is also reflected in the type of bilingual education in Slovenia, which was presented by Sonja Novak Lukanovič. Bilingual education seems to be adapted to two main educational contexts, Austrian/German and Italian, which are equally important for Slovenian minorities in those countries and for minorities living in Slovenia. Slovenia offers two main models of bilingual education, which are harmonized with the education models of the countries in which the Slovenian minorities live.

The role of the media in the (re)production of cultural identities was analyzed by Dona Kolar-Panov. The creation of national identities by the media in the post-socialist states has been to a large extent manipulated by the states, which were, and still are, the main owners of the media. They therefore reflect political rather than media projects. On the other hand, and for different reasons, the alternative media are not able to promote a counter-media strategy. Both types of media often function on the basis of stereotypes. Instead of informing, in most cases they take sides openly and participate in political manipulations, including those linked to identity formation.

In his lecture on Culturalization as Depoliticization, Boris Buden expounded the thesis that the cultural is taking the place of the political in the Southeastern European countries. Taking the view that culture is a subject and a medium of the political mission of civil society, he pointed out the importance of cultural studies for the further development and analysis of social conditions in the countries in transition. The definition and redefinition of identities stems from democratic processes that enable continuous "cultural translation". Within such an interpretation, identities are seen as relations, as processes, and as possible sources of conflicts. In Southeastern Europe the plurality of narratives prevails over the established identities. In such a situation, the "translation of identities" provides an acceptable approach to the study of identity changes.

Speaking about New Forms of Identity Construction in the West, and referring primarily to new identities of the immigrant groups, Mark Terkessidis raised the issue of political identities that tend to prevail over ethnic identities (which is a situation very similar to the Trieste case). Political identities are primarily supposed to promote democracy and freedom. In the West, there is "an institutional obligation to be free". Only culture may create a difference, which is often only a difference in

consumption, or a difference that has to be consumable. Cultural identification goes via consumerism and creates a “performing identity”. The identification of minorities, who are made visible through exclusion from the majority groups, presses for the production of new symbols which are not derived from the cultures of origin but are a new product related to the social position of visible minorities (e.g., a new type of headscarf, different from the traditional one, has been spreading among many immigrant groups from North Africa and the Near East, although they are not otherwise related). New types and symbols of identification were mentioned: pop music, adapted food receipts, etc.

The evaluation session was particularly vivid and interesting. Most participants noted that the discussions had been “inspiring and diverse”, but they also showed that people coming from different professional backgrounds have certain difficulties in communication. Some found that the discussions should have been longer, held in smaller groups, and more concentrated on policy issues. Although the diversity of topics is good, it cannot support real progress in discussing particular problems. There were opinions that visions and common standpoints should have been developed. There were also opinions that only an open approach may provide for some kind of regional interaction.

The course was generally found to be very useful. It offered structured information on the processes of identity change, as related to the democratization processes. The main concepts and views of Southeastern Europe were presented. It was pointed out that the region is not well structured from within, and that it is perceived as a whole only from the European and global perspective. However, the stereotypes about the region and regional cultures were critically examined and rejected. Issues like international regional cultural cooperation, reflections of new identity formation visible in language use and language policies, narratives representing new cultural identities, cultural imports as conceptual imports, influences of education and mass media on identity formation may give a clue to the understanding of the present situation in the region. Attention was paid to immigration groups and minorities, as well as to new forms of identity constructions that are particularly visible in immigrant groups. The present and possible future role of civil society and its implications for new identities in the context of democratization in the region were pointed out.

Lively discussions contributed to the interactive character of the course. Both the students and the lecturers made an effort to learn more, and from different angles, about Southeastern Europe.

The fact that the participants came from 24 countries and from at least 12 different professional backgrounds is an excellent basis for the future communication and networking.

**Appendix 3:
List of Participants**

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